2024-2025
Parent Handbook

A preschool for children ages 2½ to 5

New Highland Baptist Church
9200 New Ashcake Road
Mechanicsville, Virginia 23116

(804) 550-1557 (school)
(804) 550-9601 (church)

e-mail: dayschool@newhighland.org
website: www.newhighland.org
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Philosophy and Objectives

At The Day School we think that learning should be fun! Instead of dispensing knowledge, our goal is to facilitate the children's discovery by providing an enjoyable and enriching preschool environment through a Christian atmosphere of trust and safety.

We encourage children to make new friends while developing positive social values, independence, and readiness skills that will help them approach their education and future learning with confidence and ease. With your help as parents to reinforce these skillsets at home, we hope that by the time your child matriculates to kindergarten we have helped them to:

- Develop an attitude of kindness, cooperation, courtesy, and helpfulness towards others.
- Develop self-control, independence, and self-reliance.
- Further the development of large and small muscle coordination.
- Develop problem-solving skills.

History and Purpose

The Day School was established in 2006 as a non-profit ministry of New Highland Baptist Church to help meet the demand for preschool education in Hanover County and surrounding areas.

The church supports the school by providing the classroom space and by providing members to serve on The Preschool Committee. The church receives no financial benefit from the school. The Day School is a Christian School that offers an ecumenical curriculum so all children can learn about the love of Christ. Children say grace before meals, learn about the Christian meaning of holidays, and learn to respect the dignity of all persons. The Day School admits students of any race, color, gender, creed, and national or ethnic origin.

Location and Facilities

Located in central Hanover County on New Ashcake Road, the church grounds and buildings provide a pleasant, suburban setting for indoor and outdoor activities.

Facilities include:

- individual classrooms
- fenced-in playground that meets federal safety standards
- large assembly room
- modern, fully equipped kitchen

Administration

The Day School Preschool Board oversees the planning and operation of the school and employs a school Director to plan and supervise daily activities for the school. The Preschool board consists of the Senior Pastor, the Day School Director, one Day School Teacher, and church members. Committee meetings are held several times throughout the school year.

The Office of Child Care Health & Safety of the Virginia Department of Education licenses the school. The Day School meets or exceeds the minimum standards set by the State to ensure that the activities, services, and facilities are conducive to the wellbeing of children and that risks are reduced in this care-giving environment. To continue to be in compliance with all State regulations, the Department of Education may make announced and unannounced visits to the school.

Our School Day

Through music, arts and crafts, stories, and play experiences, your child will learn about various monthly themes such as sea life, community helpers, and animals with a focus on kindergarten readiness skills. Outdoor play, games and art activities will help your child develop large and small muscle coordination and problem-solving skills. During all activities we stress cooperation, good manners, self-control, and independence.

During the day children will participate in both teacher-directed activities and child-directed activities. All activities and learning materials will be developmentally appropriate. The children also enjoy snacks, music, outdoor play, show and share, and special events.

Center Times
During center time, your child may build with blocks, play in the home area, read, etc., either alone or with others. This helps your child learn cooperation, sharing, respect for property, communication, and use of imagination.

Circle Time
During circle time, each class discusses the calendar, weather, and current events. Children may then explore sorting, classifying, and sequencing skills with the teacher. In addition, they will be introduced to science/math problem solving skills; finger plays and picture journals which help enhance language skills. The classroom teacher will develop lesson plans that follow the Virginia Early Learning and Development Standards (VA ELDS) to help emphasize a particular theme.

Outdoor Play
We will go outside for at least a 30-minute period each day that the weather permits. Through games and imaginative play, we develop gross motor coordination and just work off energy! Since we are not able to keep a child inside while their group is outside, please send your child to school only when he or she is well enough to participate in outside activities. Make sure to dress your child appropriately for the weather, including sending warm jackets, mittens, hats, etc if its chilly!

Art
Children explore monthly themes through painting, clay, coloring, and more. We ask your child to listen while the teacher presents materials and tasks, and then to create what they want based on their interests, skills, creativity, imagination, and sometimes even after observing what other children are doing with the materials. Students complete activities individually, some cooperatively, and some may last several days. The process of art is more important than the product.

Since art does not always represent a particular image, when your child brings something home, please comment about the colors, the mood, the art media, etc. Below are some specific comments that may be helpful:

- *"I can see that you worked hard to cover the whole paper."*
- *"That yellow and red look good next to each other."*
- *"I like those wavy purple lines. They make me feel happy."*
- *"Those shapes must have been hard to make."*

Snack

Students have a snack period in the middle of our school day. Everyone washes his/her hands and then joins together in the classroom. The children say a brief prayer of thanks before we eat. We provide napkins for students.

Each child is responsible for bringing his or her own nut-free snack. Please bring the snack in a reusable container, or disposable paper/zip-lock bag, **LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND LAST NAME.**

This is meant to be a small snack, so please keep this in mind when you are packing.

Snack ideas include:

- crackers
- piece of fruit such as a banana or apples (sliced or whole)
- fruit cup with spoon
- applesauce pouch
- carrot/celery sticks with dip
- mini muffins/bagels

The school will provide cups for water for students in 2½ and 3-year-old classes, but we request that pre-K students bring reusable water bottles labeled with their name.

*If we have any food allergies (other than peanuts) we may require additional restrictions on snacks in that classroom. Your child's teacher will notify you if this is the case for your child's class.

Birthday Treats and Parties

Birthdays and parties are celebrated in your child's individual classroom. Parents may volunteer to send in nut-free store-bought cupcakes or a treat. Since some celebrations take place during snack time, the teacher will notify you if you don't need to send an individual snack that day.

Special Classes

Library

Children visit our small library with their classes each week. We encourage students to check out one book per week. The purpose is to foster a love of books while giving the children responsibility for their care.

Music

Your child's class will have music time each week. We sing simple songs with finger plays, along with creative movement which helps increase listening skills and knowledge of our bodies and how they move.

Religion

Students enrolled in classes that meet on Mondays will attend a weekly whole-group chapel service. This brief and developmentally appropriate non-denominational Christian service will have themes such as thankfulness, solidarity, stewardship of creation, and love. Bible stories and songs will be used to convey these themes.
Students enrolled in Tuesday and Thursday classes will have a brief religion class with the same themes, stories, and songs as above.

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics)

Children visit our STEAM lab with their class each week. Students learn about monthly themes through self-guided learning with sequenced activities and learning materials.

Show and Share

The students are encouraged to bring items for show and share based on the theme of the week. The goal is to help your child learn to speak in front of a group and share with others. Please do not allow your child to bring more than one item, so that all of the children have adequate time to participate. We do not permit toys and other personal possessions in the classroom other than for show and share times.

Stretch –N-Grow

Stretch-N-Grow is a comprehensive fitness and health education program taught by coaches who make exercising "Excer-citing!" This weekly early childhood physical education, nutrition and wellness program improves the level of fitness in our students and teaches them the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the perils of inactivity. Each class at The Day School participates in a 30-minute Stretch-N-Grow class in the gym each week during the regular school day. Your child's teacher will be able to tell you which day each week your child's class will participate (either Tuesdays or Wednesdays). There is no extra charge for this activity; the Stretch-N-Grow tuition is included in the activity fees you paid when you registered your child for preschool. It is important for your child to wear tennis shoes and comfortable clothing for exercising on Stretch-N-Grow days.

Policies and Procedures

Arrival

Children may begin arriving at 8:55 AM. A teacher will help your child out of the car and walk him or her into the entrance of the school between 8:55 AM and 9:10 AM. If you arrive before that time, please stay in your car and wait in line until a teacher approaches your vehicle. If you arrive after 9:10 AM, please ring the office bell at the side door of the church.

Morning Car Drop Off

Procedure

Enter the parking lot and turn left onto the gravel road to drive behind the church.

Come along the side of church and turn right, then proceed to the school doors.

The children will be collected from cars in the three blue X areas by the teachers beginning at 8:55.

Dismissal

Children will be dismissed promptly at 12:00 Noon when their parent arrives. If someone other than a parent is going to pick up your child, you must grant permission for this pickup in Brightwheel. For your child's protection and in accordance with state guidelines, your child cannot be released to another person without permission or to anyone who does not appear responsible. If you or a responsible adult cannot pick up your child, please contact the school to make us aware of your situation.

Check-Out Procedure

1. Park in the front (main) parking lot.
2. At 11:55, a staff member will open the main church door.
3. Once you enter the church you can:

   A. Use your phone with Brightwheel app to scan the printed QR codes that we will have posted in the lobby, then check out your student(s) with your personal 4 digit code.

   B. Use our **checkout kiosk** to enter your personal 4 digit code.

4. Walk down the school hallway to pick up your student from his or her classroom.

A **late fee** will be assessed to parents who are chronically late in picking up their children from school. The first 2 times a parent is late a warning will be given. For any tardiness thereafter, there will be a charge of $10 after 10 minutes late, and then an additional $10 for every 10 minutes after.

For the safety of everyone, please hold your child's hand when crossing the parking lot. No cars should be left running when an adult is not in attendance. You are welcome to gather in a grassy area with other parents and students to visit with each other after school; however, children are not allowed to run freely in the parking lot, or hang/play on the flag pole or plants and bushes.

Brightwheel

We use Brightwheel to send messages, updates, invoices, and much more. It is a time-saving tool that is 100% free for parents.

To join Brightwheel, please follow the steps below:

1. Create a free Brightwheel account. When you receive an invitation via email or text, please create a free parent account using either the web or mobile app. Make sure to use the same email address or cell phone number that the invitation was sent to. Here is a quick video overview.
2. Confirm your child's profile. You will see your child's profile after you create an account - you can confirm information such as birthday, allergies, and additional contacts. If you do not see your child's profile, please contact us with the email address or phone number you used to sign up. You will not see updates within Brightwheel until we start to use it regularly.
3. Set your account preferences. You can adjust your notification preferences within your profile settings on the app.
4. Add your payment information. Brightwheel offers secure, automated online payments that saves time for us and gives you advanced tools and reporting. Please add your payment information. Here is an online Payments Setup Guide with more info.

Class Schedules

Classes meet September through May from 9:00 AM until 12:00 PM. Our 2½-year-old students attend two days a week, 3-year-olds attend two or three days a week and 4-year-olds attend three, four, or five days a week. The school is closed during the summer.

Class Size

At the beginning of the year, your child will be placed in a class with other children of the same age and will participate in activities with this group. To ensure that each child receives individual attention and encouragement, each class is limited to 8 children in our 2 1/2-year-old classes, 10 children in our 3-year-old classes, and 12 children in our 4-year-old classes. We believe that keeping the size of the classes small is a key to providing a nurturing environment for the children.

Clothing

Children should wear clothes that allow them to be self-reliant when they use the bathroom. Tennis Shoes are preferable. Please, NO OPEN TOE SHOES, FLIP-FLOPS, OR CROCS. Dress shoes, boots, or slip-ons are also inappropriate and may be dangerous for many of our activities. Mark all sweaters, coats, jackets, etc. with your child's name.

Bring an extra set of clothing, complete with socks and underwear, to school on your child's first day. This will be kept in their cubby and used for emergencies. Please put the clothes in a gallon-sized zip-lock bag and write your child's name on the bag.

Communication with Parents

We welcome your questions about how your child is doing at school. Please contact the teaching team or the director any time you have a concern. You can do this via Brightwheel or email (dayschool@newhighland.org). We will arrange an in-person meeting or a phone call.

To help you understand what your child is doing at school, you will receive regular communication from your teacher via Brightwheel and/or physical calendars or newsletters home in your child's school bag that will provide information about upcoming events, monthly themes, and objectives.

Conferences

In-person or phone conferences days will be scheduled in January 2025. Your teacher will communicate details about scheduling the conference. Two-way communication is vital to providing the best understanding of your child's needs, and we hope you'll schedule this time into your calendar. Again, we welcome any questions about how your child is doing at school. Please call us any time you have a concern.

Volunteers

The Day School welcomes and encourages family involvement in our program. If you wish to volunteer, please contact the director or your child's teacher.

Holidays, Snow & Ice

We follow the schedule of closings for holidays and inclement weather of the Hanover County School system. Please listen to the radio or television news or follow HCPS and Day School social media for information on closing or late openings. If Hanover Schools open two hours late, The Day School will open at 10:30A.M. and dismiss at 12:30PM. As a general rule, snow days are not made up at the end of the year. We will notify you of schedule changes via Brightwheel.

Injury Prevention

1. Children will be supervised at all times.
2. Teacher will check class room every day for potential hazards.
3. Teacher will check bathrooms every day for potential hazards.
4. Teacher will demonstrate to all children on how to use materials and equipment safely.
5. All parents will be informed on proper drop off and pick up procedures.

General Safety Rules for Children

1. No running inside the building.
2. No climbing on cubbies.
3. No standing on tables or chairs.
4. Do not throw toys.
5. Clean up your area.
6. Wear play clothes and closed toed, rubber soled shoes.

Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

A very important part of the preschool experience is helping children learn how to get along in the world, enjoy being with other children, and follow the direction of an adult other than their parent. A caring and positive approach will be taken regarding behavior management and discipline at The Day School. Our teachers will focus on the positive behaviors of the children and reinforce those behaviors as often as possible. Our goal is to help the children develop self-control and responsibility for their actions.

The Day School's disciplinary procedures will consist of the following strategies:

- Encouraging children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child and facilitating children in their attempts to settle their own disputes.
- Redirecting behavior
- Separating a child from the group (Time-Out) – a maximum of one minute away for each year of age.
- Counseling children individually about their behaviors.
- Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns (Incident Report).

Disruptive Behavior distracts from the full benefit of the preschool program and will result in consequences. The following behaviors are considered disruptive:

- Inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, adults, or self
- Disrespects people and materials provided in the program
- Consistently disobeys the rules of the classroom
- Verbally threatens other students and/or staff
- Uses verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from the group of children.

Disciplinary Procedures for Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive Behavior will be addressed in an incident report. This will be completed to document any inappropriate behaviors that directly impact other children, staff members, or the group as a whole. This report will be shared with the parent and will explain the behavior and how the behavior has affected others. It will also explain how the situation was resolved. The incident report will be given to the parent or sent home in the child's school bag to be signed and returned the next school day to the teacher.

If a child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a recurring basis, parents will be asked to meet with the child's teacher and the director to discuss an intervention plan. If the child's behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary for the child to be sent home for a time to be determined or removed from the preschool program altogether.

A child may also be dismissed if a parent is negligent in abiding by school policies.

Eligibility/Enrollment

The Day School admits students of any race, color, gender, creed, and national or ethnic origin. The minimum age for attendance eligibility is age 2½ by September 30th, and all attending children must be potty trained. The director determines acceptance under the guidelines as stated by the licensing regulations from The Department of Social Services.

Inclusion Policy

The Day School at New Highland Baptist Church believes in the importance of including children with disabilities in the same classroom as their non-disabled peers. The experience of working with others of varying abilities is mutually beneficial to both groups of students. We will work with students who are developmentally delayed and make reasonable accommodations as our resources allow. We will also work with all students to achieve success in learning appropriate social behavior. (Please see Disciplinary Policy and Procedures). However, in the event that we are unable to meet the needs of the child, given our resources and limitations, or if any student is unable to meet our behavioral expectations to the extent that they interfere with the learning of others, the student may be asked to withdraw from the school for a time to be determined or removed from the program altogether, immediately and without penalty.

Potty Training

The Day School's policy is that **all** of our students must be potty trained, and our staff is prohibited from changing diapers or pull-ups. Please know that it is completely normal for a preschooler to have an occasional accident, and we will help a child change into dry clothes if that occurs; however, frequent or daily accidents detract from our regular activities. Therefore, if your child has regular bathroom accidents at school, we will ask you to keep your child at home for an undetermined time until he/she has achieved enough mastery to stay clean and dry during the 3 hours they are at school.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

The Day School has a detailed emergency preparedness plan that includes fire, tornado, intruder, bomb threats, and natural disasters. It is kept in the Director's office if you would like to review it. We practice emergency drills with the students each month. If the Day School does have an actual emergency we will contact you by phone, starting with the home/work numbers provided in Brightwheel. We will then try any cell numbers provided. If we cannot contact you, we will begin calling the emergency contacts that you provided.

Insurance

New Highland Baptist Church carries liability insurance that covers The Day School and its activities.

Health and Absences from School

The director must have an up-to-date health form for all new students which must be signed by your child's physician by the first day of school. If your child is ill or will not be attending school, please notify the director or call the school and leave a message.

Children with contagious diseases are not permitted to attend. If your child appears to be sick at school, he or she will be separated from the other children. The director will ask you or the person responsible for your child during school hours to pick up your child immediately. Children should be free of fever (under 100.4 without fever reducing medication for 24 hours), vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.

Anytime a child develops a long-term illness that requires special care or facilities not available at The Day School, the child may be required to withdraw from the school.

Medication

We are prohibited from administering medications, sun screen, or bug repellent. However, the director and several staff members are trained and certified in the administration of emergency injector medications (such as Epi-pens).

Tuition and Fees

A registration fee of $200 is due upon enrollment. This fee covers the cost of Stretch-N-Grow, Scholastic weekly readers, any special events, plays, or special guests for the year. Since the school contracts for the total enrollment for each event, no discount will be available on this fee if your child is unable to attend an activity.

Tuition is due the first day of each month and must be paid in full even if a child misses days. A $25 late tuition charge will be levied if tuition is not received by the 10th of the month.

Online Bill Pay Through Brightwheel

All tuition and fees invoices are sent through Brightwheel billing. You can make payments through your phone, sign up for autopay, and download your transaction reports yourself for tax season. Please Note: If you add a Debit and/or Credit Card as a payment method, these forms of payment will be subject to higher processing fees. If possible, we'd recommend setting up a Bank Account as a payment method for a lower transaction fee through ACH.

Payment Options and Due Dates

Yearly Payment due September 1, 2024 can be paid electronically through Brightwheel or by personal check.

Semester Payment

- Two equal payments based on the yearly tuition amount.
- 1st semester payment due September 1, 2024. Second semester payment due January 12, 2025.

Monthly Payment

- 9 equal monthly payments based on the yearly tuition amount.
- Monthly payments **must be made electronically through Brightwheel Billing** and include service fees.
- First month's tuition payment due September 1, 2024, remaining 8 payments due the 1st of each month (October 1, 2024 – May 1, 2025.)
- A $25 late tuition charge will be charged if tuition is not received by the 10th of the month.

Please reach out to **help@mybrightwheel.com** if you need any assistance.

Tuition rates are:

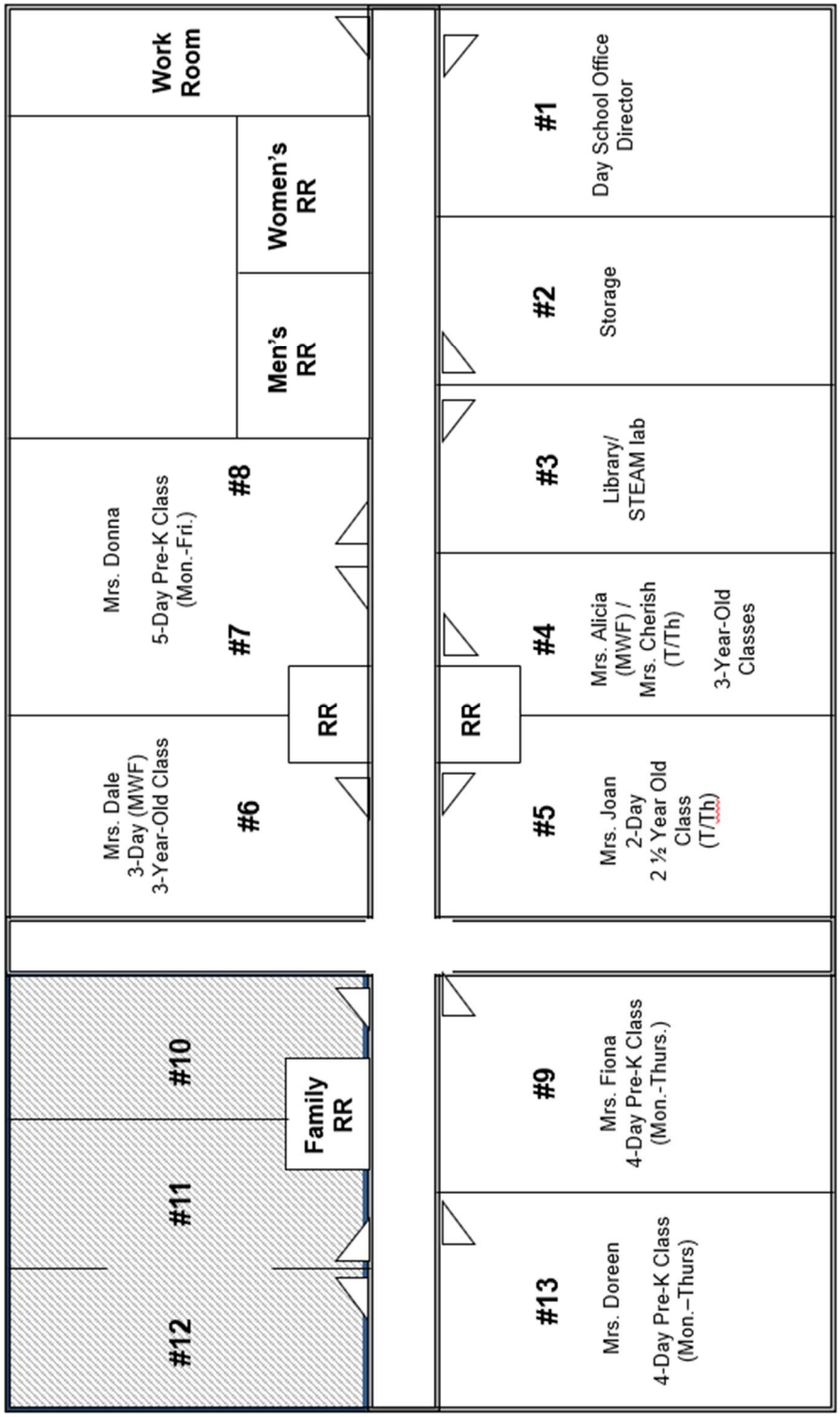
Class	Class Days & Time		Month	Semester	Year
2 ½-Year-Old	Tues, Thurs	9-12	$210	$945	$1,890
3-Year-Old	Tues, Thurs	9-12	$210	$945	$1,890
3-Year-Old	Mon, Wed, Fri	9-12	$260	$1,170	$2,340
Pre-K 4 Days	Mon-Thurs	9-12	$295	$1,327	$2,655
Pre-K 5 Days*	Mon-Fri	9-12	$330	$1,485	$2,970
Jr. Kindergarten*	Mon-Fri	9-1:30	$450	$2,025	$4,050
	(12pm pick up on Friday)				

- There is a 5% total tuition discount for families with more than one child enrolled.
- Parents who substitute for our school will receive an additional discount on tuition.

Withdrawals

If you wish to withdraw your child from the school, please give the Director two weeks' advance notice. If notice is not given, an additional two weeks' tuition will be due. Generally, tuition is not refundable except by approval of The Preschool Committee for exceptional situations.

Day School Classroom Map



2024-2025 School Calendar

In general, we follow the calendar for Hanover County Public Schools. During the year, there may be some changes. If so, we will let you know as soon as possible. We do **NOT** routinely make up snow days at the end of the year.

Time and Dates of events such as the *Christmas Performance, Easter Egg Hunt, etc* will take place during your student's class and will be communicated by the teacher in advance.

The Day School Calendar 2024-2025

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

9/6 Meet The Teacher
9/9 & 9/10 First Day of School

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

10/18 Student Holiday

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

11/4 Election Day Holiday
11/5 Student Holiday
11/27-29 Thanksgiving Break

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

12/23-31 Winter Break

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1/1 - 3 Winter Break
1/13 Student Holiday
1/20 MLK Day Holiday

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

2/17 President's Day Holiday

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

3/21 Student Holiday
3/31 Spring Break

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

4/1 - 4 Spring Break

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

5/21 Last Day of School
5/22 PreK Graduation