

Columbia Academy 2026-2027



Pre-School and Kindergarten Guidelines

Welcome from the Head of School

Welcome to Columbia Academy Preschool and Kindergarten! We are honored to partner with your family during this exciting season of your child's life. God has entrusted us with the incredible responsibility of raising and teaching children. Proverbs 22:6 reminds us, *"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."* At Columbia Academy, we embrace this calling by providing a safe, spiritual, family environment where our youngest learners are encouraged to grow morally, intellectually, physically, socially, and spiritually. Through high expectations and Christ-centered instruction, we help each child build a strong foundation of faith, character, and a love of learning while discovering his or her God-given potential.

Your involvement is an important part of your child's success. We encourage you to share information that will help us better understand and care for your child. Please share only what you feel is appropriate. Any information you provide will be treated with care and kept confidential.

We look forward to partnering with you for a wonderful year of learning, growth, and discovery.

Thank you,

Julia Foxworth

2026-2027

Columbia Academy Administrative Staff

Head of School	Julia Porter Foxworth
Director of Operations, Athletics and Activities	Keith Stanley
Director of Development	Mary Lois Brady
Counselor	Dr. Scott Oliver
Elementary Coordinator & Interventionist	Angel Reagan
Marketing and Branding Director	Kaylee Beal
Student Services and Business Office Manager	Wendy Barnes
Business Office Manager	Cynthia Davis
Student Attendance and Records Coordinator	Tammy Morris
Front Office Coordinator	Becky Fortenberry

Columbia Academy Pre-School and Kindergarten Guidelines 2026-2027

This handbook provides supplemental guidelines specific to Preschool and Kindergarten. All families are responsible for reviewing and following the policies outlined in the Columbia Academy General Information Handbook, which serves as the school's official governing handbook. The General Information Handbook is available at www.cacougars.com.

Arrival and Dismissal

Morning carline is from **7:20–7:55 a.m.** Classes begin promptly at **7:55 a.m.** Students may not be dropped off before **7:20 a.m.**, as supervision is unavailable.

If your child arrives after **7:55 a.m.**, you must sign them in at the main office. A staff member will escort your child to the Preschool/Kindergarten building. For safety reasons, children may not walk into the building unescorted.

To help keep the carline moving efficiently, please have your child ready to exit the vehicle with backpacks and belongings prepared. Faculty members will assist students each morning. Parents may not park and walk children to the Preschool/Kindergarten building.

Preschool and Kindergarten dismiss at **2:30 p.m.** Students in K3–K5 may not be checked out after **1:45 p.m.** On half days, dismissal is **11:20 a.m.**

Each family will receive a dismissal card displaying the child's name and class. Please place this card on the passenger-side visor during afternoon pickup.

If your child will be picked up differently than usual or checked out early, please notify the school **before 1:00 p.m.** by written note, phone call to the office, or email to your child's teacher. For your child's safety, transportation changes will not be accepted except via written notification.

Toileting, Hygiene, and Dress

Students must be fully toilet trained and able to use the restroom independently, including managing clothing and personal hygiene. If your child has a toileting accident, you may be asked to come to the school to assist with clean-up. After a third accident, your child will be required to remain at home until he or she is consistently and independently toilet trained.

Please dress your child in comfortable, school-appropriate clothing. K5 students are required to wear the Columbia Academy school uniform. Please refer to the Student Handbook for those guidelines. Because students participate in active, hands-on learning each day, tennis shoes with laces or Velcro closures are recommended.

K5 students should keep a complete change of clothes in a labeled zip-top bag in their backpack.

Daily Folders and Communication

Each day your child will bring home an orange folder containing classwork, school communications, and other important information. Please check the folder each evening and return it to school the following morning with any notes or forms for the teacher. Students should have a backpack large enough to hold both the orange folder and a lunchbox.

A kindergarten newsletter, calendar (attached to your child's folder) and a new monthly menu should be in your child's folder by the first of each month. Please send a note to your child's teacher if you do not receive them. We will send one home as soon as possible.

Lunch and Snacks

When sending money to school for lunch, snacks, field trips, or other activities, please place it in a sealed envelope or zip-top bag labeled with your child's name, purpose, and amount enclosed. All notes, forms, and money should be placed inside your child's orange folder, not in the backpack.

Students may bring lunch or purchase one from the cafeteria. Lunches from home should be packed in a labeled, sturdy lunchbox. Please do not send food that requires heating, glass containers, or carbonated drinks. Hot foods should be sent in a thermos.

Children may bring water, milk, or juice. No tea or carbonated beverages are permitted.

Each child should bring a daily snack, including on half days. Breakfast should be eaten before arriving at school, as breakfast is not served in the classroom.

Cafeteria purchases are charged to your child's cafeteria account. Lunch and snack selections should be submitted daily according to the monthly menu. If your child has food allergies or dietary restrictions, please notify your child's teacher and the school office.

Please contact the Business Office with any questions regarding your child's cafeteria account.

Attendance

Illness: CA does their part in minimizing the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and the use of antibacterial gel. Routine cleaning is administered throughout the school day. Colds, flu, strep and COVID 19 are contagious diseases and a serious issue in a school environment. If your child is ill please keep them home.

- Fever-If your child has a fever in the evening before school or the morning of school, you are required to keep them home for 24 hours. They may return to school if they are fever free without medication for 24 hours. If your child continues to have a fever, see your physician as soon as possible.

- Upset stomach-If your child vomits during the evening or morning of school do not send them to school. You should wait 24 hours since the last stomach incident to send them back to school.
- Strep Throat-A strep condition requires a doctor's visit and medication. The child must be on medication and fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Contagious Conditions-Impetigo, chicken pox, measles, rubella, mumps, whooping cough, meningitis, conjunctivitis (pink eye), and etc. are contagious diseases and must be treated and no longer contagious before your child returns to school.
- Cold-Your child may come to school if fever free for the prior 24 hours. If your child exhibits severe symptoms such as a persistent cough, or severe runny nose that distracts learning, keep them at home.

If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be brought to the office for a symptom and temperature check. A parent or guardian will be called and expected to pick up the child as soon as possible.

Absences

Absences will not be classified as excused or unexcused. Students are expected to attend class unless there are valid reasons preventing them from being present. Personal illness, family catastrophes, and other situations arise which may require a student to be absent from school. All absences will be recorded as such and will accumulate toward the total allowed for the class. In the case of extenuating circumstances the Head of School and the Board of Directors will determine if any absence may be excluded from the total allowed absences. Information about student absences (doctor's note, parents' note, or direct parent contact) should be submitted to the attendance officer. Verification should be given in person or emailed to tmorris@cacougars.com.

All absences will be considered undocumented unless parental contact is made by note or in person. All absences, other than those due to school activities, will count toward the total number of absences. Medical absences will count toward the total number of absences for a student.

Any K5 student who has more than 20 days absent will not meet the criteria to promote to the next grade level.

Pep Rallies

During football season, pep rallies are held on Fridays at 1:10 pm in the gym. K3, K4 and K5 students attend the pep rallies and sit together in the student section of the gym.

To ensure the safety and accountability of all students, parents and guardians may not remove students from a pep rally, assembly, chapel, or other school-wide event without properly checking the student out through the school office.

Parents and guardians are welcome to attend school pep rallies and assemblies. Parents who attend may sit with their student's class during the event; however, students must remain under the supervision of the school throughout the event and may not leave with a parent directly from the venue. At the conclusion of the event, all visitors (non-students) must exit through the designated visitor doors. Students will return to their regular dismissal procedures and must be picked up through the normal carline or other approved school dismissal process.

Failure to follow these procedures may result in restrictions on future event attendance.

General Guidelines

- **K3, K4, and K5 Students:** A copy of your child's birth certificate, Social Security card or number, and current immunization records must be provided on or before the first day of school.
- **Toys:** Please do not send toys to school. Be sure to check your child's backpack regularly for any items that may accidentally be brought from home.
- **Classroom Spending Money:** You may wish to send a small amount of extra money for your child's teacher to keep on hand for Sweet's Day, Cheek Cheers, and other classroom activities. This money will be kept in a secure location. Please send it in a labeled Ziploc bag with your child's name clearly marked.
- **Little Dribblers:** Columbia Academy offers a Little Dribblers program for our students. Participants will need to purchase a T-shirt, while basketballs will be provided. Please note that K3 students do not participate in the Little Dribblers program.
- **FACTS:** All parents must have an active email address on file with the Business Office in order to access the FACTS system.
- **Sweet's Day:** Sweet's Day is held every Wednesday and serves as a classroom fundraiser. Proceeds are used to purchase instructional materials and classroom supplies. Once every eight weeks, each family will be asked to send 36 individually prepackaged snack items to sell. Please do not send gum or items containing nuts or peanut butter.

Each time it is your class's turn, we will also need at least two parent volunteers to assist with sales. We recommend that children purchase no more than two items. Fifty cents (\$0.50) is generally sufficient for Sweet's Day, and purchased treats will be enjoyed during snack time.

- **School Fundraisers and Service Projects:** Throughout the year, organizations such as the Honor Society, Key Club, and Student Council sponsor community service projects and fundraisers. Examples include St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Relay for Life, toy drives, Band-Aids for Blair E. Batson, and Operation Christmas Child. Participation is always appreciated but is not required.
- **Nap Mats:** Nap mats and/or mat covers will be sent home each Friday. Please wash them, allow them to dry completely, and return them on Monday. We do not have extra mats available. Please ensure that your child's pillow and blanket remain attached to the nap mat. Mats will be stored in each child's cubby and used during daily rest time.
- To help maintain a safe and productive learning environment, we ask that parents do not come directly to the classroom while school is in session. If you have an emergency or

need to get a message to your child or your child's teacher, please contact the school office at **(601) 736-6418** or email your child's teacher.

- Please keep the school and your child's teacher informed of any changes to your current phone number, address, or other emergency contact information. On your child's emergency form, list additional individuals we may contact if we are unable to reach you. If you will be at a different phone number during the day, please let us know how to reach you.
- Additionally, please inform your child's teacher of any medical conditions, allergies, or other important information that may affect your child's care or learning at school.

Important Dates (Tentative) 2026-2027

Event	Date
Grandparent's Day	September 16
Trash Bag Fundraiser	September Start Date
Pumpkin Patch	October TBD
Homecoming Float	Week of October 23rd
Fall Parties	October 30, 2026
Thanksgiving Feast	November 20, 2026, 11 am
Christmas Party, Jesus Birthday Party	December 11, 2026/ Times Scheduled
Little Dribblers	Basketball Season
Valentine's Party	February 12, 2027
Easter Party	March 24, 2027
Field Trips	TBD
End of Year Program	May 10, 2027
Kindergarten Graduation	May 11, 2027 at 6 pm. Kindergarten Time Capsule
End of Year Parties	May 17-20, 2027

HELP WANTED

Dear Parents:

We will be involved in a variety of projects during this school year and would appreciate your help. Please take the time to fill out the form below and return to your child's teacher.

Student's Name _____

Parent's Name _____

Address _____

Email Address _____

Phone _____

Teacher _____ Grade Level _____

I am willing to help in the following areas:

_____ Room Mother

_____ Fall Party

_____ Thanksgiving

_____ Christmas

_____ Year-End Party

_____ End of Year Program

_____ Fundraisers

_____ Easter Egg Hunt

_____ Sweet's Day Helper

_____ Grandparent's Day

_____ Valentine's

_____ Homecoming

Please mark the areas in which you are willing to be of assistance and return the form to your child's teacher.

STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET

Name (first, middle, last) _____

My child likes to be called _____ Birth date _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Home Address _____

Medical Problems: Vision _____ Speech _____ Hearing _____

Other (Please Explain) _____

Special Medications _____

Allergies (food, medicine, bites, stings, etc.) _____

Mother's Full Name _____

Place of Employment _____ Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Father's Full Name _____

Email Address _____

Place of Employment _____ Phone Number _____

Are parents divorced? _____ If yes, child lives with _____

How does your child get home from school?

(Check all that apply)

Car Line _____ Bus/Van # _____ Other _____

Do you have any other children at CA? _____ If yes, please list name and grade.

