

Espanola Public Schools



PreK Program Parent Handbook

2017-2018





New Mexico PreK is a voluntary preschool program created by the Pre-Kindergarten Act of 2005. The PreK program is jointly administered by the Public Education Department and the Children, Youth, and Families Department. Children who have reached their 4th birthday by September 1st are eligible to attend a PeK program. The purpose of PreK is to ensure every child in New Mexico has the opportunity to attend a high quality early childhood education program before kindergarten. The purpose of New Mexico PreK is to:

- 1. Increase access to voluntary high-quality pre-kindergarten programs**
- 2. Provide developmentally appropriate activities for New Mexico children**
- 3. Expand early childhood community capacity**
- 4. Support linguistically and culturally appropriate curriculum**
- 5. Focus on school readiness**

What can you expect at our school sites:

Pre-K children learn through play. Teachers carefully arrange their classrooms and plan activities that provide children with the opportunity to

do lots of different things—especially things they might not have ever done before. Pre-K encourages children to:

- Explore
- Make decisions
- Solve problems
- Expand their vocabulary, and
- Get excited about learning

You will not see children sitting quietly at desks in a Pre-K classroom. Pre-K children are active—busy—working. The Pre-K classroom (inside and outside) has different areas where children can learn. You will see areas for:

- Building with blocks
- Reading
- Working on puzzles
- Painting
- Writing
- Climbing
- Looking at seashells, bird nests, etc.
- Meeting with the whole class to talk about new babies at home, what they had for dinner, etc.

Our curriculum is based on the Pre-K standards for New Mexico, New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines. Teachers use a variety of resources in order to meet the guidelines and provide maximum multi-sensory learning opportunities that are developmentally appropriate, child centered, and hands-on. The early learning guidelines are research based, and can be accessed at www.newmexicoprek.org.

In order to help parents become familiar with these specific guidelines, individual student reports are discussed during parent teacher conferences. Developmentally appropriate activities change somewhat as children's skills increase. For example, a child who has just turned four is probably more skillful with play dough than with a pencil because the small hand muscles (fine motor) are not as developed as they will be in the future. Our goal is provide experiences in which students are successful while also providing some challenge in order to help them progress in all areas, both physically and academically.

Pre-K attendance promotes growth in the social/emotional area as well as in academics. At our sites we teach children to follow procedures and self-regulate.

Alcalde Elementary School, Los Ninos Kindergarten Center and ETS Elementary School NM PreK School Hours:

NM Pre-K Extended day 8:30 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

LosNinos PreK 3y-4y School Hours:

AM classes begin at 8:30 – 11:25

PM classes begin at 11:25-2:20

Confidentiality plays a vital role in promoting respect for every individual and fostering a strong community. Espanola Early Childhood programs take confidentiality very seriously. We make every effort to protect each family's privacy. Communications among staff and parents about children should be kept confidential at all times. We recommend that conversations about a child, behavior, or incident should be conducted in private, away from the child and other members of our community. If a parent has a question or concern, we suggest that this parent first contact the teacher via email or in person to arrange a time to discuss.

What to Bring

Please remember to label each item that your child brings to school (lunch box, backpack, coat, sweater, hat, mittens, boots, etc.).

Dress

- Your child should be dressed for active and participatory play. We do not want a child's creativity hampered because he/she is wearing clothing that should not get dirty.
- Your child should wear sturdy, protective shoes (no sandals or Crocs®), which will enable him/her to run, climb, and ride bikes with ease.
- Children go outside most days, so please dress your child appropriately.
- In the winter, hat and mittens are needed every day. Snow pants and warm boots are important whenever there is snow on the ground.

Extra Clothes

In school, at all times, each child should have at least one set of seasonal clothes that fit – pants, shirt, underwear, socks — which should remain in the child's back pack.

ELIGIBILITY

NM PreK children must have reached their fourth (4th) birthday before September 1 of the current calendar year. Early PreK children must have reached their third (3rd) birthday before September 1 of the current year. In Espanola Public Schools, any three (3) year old must have an identified developmental delay to be eligible to participate in our Early PreK program. We also accept peer model students, who are students that do not qualify for an IEP. . EPS hosts Child Find events throughout the year to support parents on their journey of identifying any suspected delays with their child.

ATTENDANCE

A definite relationship exists between success in school and good attendance. Therefore, it is very important that your child is in school every day unless they are ill or other special circumstances exist. For children to receive the full benefits of participating in PreK it is expected they will attend at least 90% of the time. When children are sick, their ability to function and learn in the classroom is reduced. We expect your child to stay home until they are well. This will also reduce the chance of infecting the other children. If your child becomes sick at school, we will make every effort to contact you or your emergency contact to take them home. We will try to make them as comfortable as possible until you arrive. Keep your contact numbers and address current with the office and teacher so we may reach you when necessary! Not only is attendance important for academic success, the attendance of school age children (any child reaching his or her 5th birthday by September 1 until reaching 18 years of age or graduation) is required by state law (22-12-2 NMSA, 1978). Excused absences include illness, illness of a parent, sibling, or other immediate family member, bereavement, or other family emergencies, and observance of major religious holidays of the family's faith. Excused absences do not include family vacations, sleeping in, and a

parent's inability to wake up on time, haircuts, shopping, or a general desire not to come to school on a given day. We know that life happens, and every student becomes ill from time to time. We also understand that sometimes other illnesses in the family need to be addressed and it is not possible for a student to attend school. We do not expect, nor do we desire, to have students in school who are running a fever, vomiting, coughing excessively, or generally feeling bad. Students with these symptoms should remain at home or be taken to a physician at the parent's/guardian's discretion to allow the student time to recover from the illness and to help prevent the spread of disease to others. Parents or guardians should attempt to schedule medical, dental, and other appointments after school hours whenever possible. If a student misses school due to a medical or dental appointment, the parent should ask for an appointment card or a doctor's note. The appointment card or doctor's note can be used as documentation of the excused absence. If a student remains home and does not see a physician, the parent should call the school on the day of the absence to verify the reason for the absence. If calling the school is not possible, parents may send a signed note to school with the student when he or she returns. Whenever possible, the school will make a reasonable effort to contact a parent to verify why a student is absent if the parent has not contacted the school prior to the absence or on the day of the absence. If parental contact is made, no other action is needed. For absences greater than one (1) day in length, the school should be notified each day of the absence. However, if the parent knows that a student will be absent for more than one (1) day, notifying the school at the beginning of the absence will suffice. We recommend that if an absence will be more than three (3) days in duration, the parent make contact with the school so that arrangements can be made to provide instructional materials and assignments to the student so that work can be completed during the absence if possible. In all cases, if an excused absence is expected to be for more than five (5) days, parents should contact the school. Verbal notice or notes from parents identifying the reason for the absence will only be accepted until the day following the absence. Verification of an excused absence after the day of return will only be accepted in the form of a note from a physician, clinic, or dentist confirming the dates of the absence. A verified absence is not necessarily an excused absence. However,

verification is important for the safety of students. Verification provides the school with information that you, as a parent or guardian, know the student is not in school on a given day or at a given time. Administrator will work with the parents/guardians and student to determine the cause of the unexcused absences, what resources might be available to assist the parents/guardians and student, and create a corrective action plan to help prevent future unexcused absences. Upon a tenth (10th) unexcused absence, parents or guardians will be notified by mail or in person that the student is now considered habitually truant, and another meeting between the parents/guardians, student, and administration must occur. This meeting will be held to develop intervention strategies focused on keeping the student in school. School personnel will schedule family meetings when concerns arise regarding student attendance. An Attendance Plan will be developed and resources provided to assist the family in getting the child to return to school consistently.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Believing the idea that if families grow and learn, young children grow and learn, ready to develop into productive and successful citizens. Espanola Public Schools understands the urgency that parents have been and will be one of the most important factors in their child's success during their educational journey. Efforts to support our PreK parents with 90 hours or more for family engagement time.

Parent Visits to Classrooms: Parents are welcome to visit classrooms as desired. It is necessary for you to take into consideration, however, that situations where you need to talk extensively with the teacher, that you schedule a meeting outside of instructional time additional parent resources are available on the New Mexico PreK website at www.newmexicoprek.org. Parents will find an abundance of materials pertaining to child expected growth and development, ideas to create meaningful interactions with young children, and help if you need assistance finding what you need.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCEDURES PLAN

Supports are in place to help identify any special needs of our PreK children early in the process of them becoming a PreK student in Espanola Public Schools. We believe that all students have special needs. Therefore, we work diligently to provide specific learning opportunities throughout all instruction and play. Many of our students participate in our Child Find Screenings planned throughout the school year. District and local service providers work collaboratively to identify individual needs and refer for additional testing as appropriate. Prior to any child's participation in assessments parents are required to sign a permission to screen and/or evaluate that allows school personnel to assess the child. Screenings include Parent Intake, diagnostic assessments as referred, Speech & Language Pathologists, School Nurses, Occupational and Physical Therapist, PK Teachers, and counselor/social workers. Parents are notified before leaving Child Find whether or not the child is being referred for more testing. Student data from evaluations are considered by all teachers when planning lessons and play learning opportunities for all children. Parents are encouraged to attend all IEP meetings and participate by providing school personnel with any information that will assist in planning an effective educational plan for the child. School representatives will provide facts from testing results and guide families through the IEP to ensure a clear understanding of the process. Once an IEP is in place for a child, teachers immediately implement the modifications stated on the IEP to support the learning needs of the child. Our PreK program is designed to be inclusive in addition to providing opportunities for peers to be role models in our three and four year old classrooms. Any child entering the Espanola Public School District with a current Individualized Education Program will be directed to go to our local Special Student Services office for the IEP to be reviewed. They will notify our school office of services being transferred and the students will continue with these services until an IEP meeting is held (within 45 days of transfer into our program). At that point any changes recommended during the meeting will be implemented as required. We believe all children can learn from and with each other.

***Please see attached NM PreK calendar and PreK 3y and 4y calendar



2017-2018 SCHOOL CALENDAR (NM Pre K)

Board Revision Approval: May 17, 2017

NM Pre K School Hours: 8:30-2:15

JULY 2017

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AUGUST 2017

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DECEMBER 2017

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PED Reporting Days

Summer	- Sept 1 (K3+)
40th Day	-2nd Wed Oct (10/11)
80th Day	-Dec 1
120th day	- 2nd Wed Feb (2/14)
EOY	- after last day (5/29)

Important Dates 2017 / 2018

July 24-August 11	Pre-Registration for New Students
August 7 and 8	New Teacher In-service
August 9, 10, 11	Teacher In-service (No School for Students)
August 14-15	Home Visits
August 16	First Day of School Class Orientation at 8:30 School Welcome/Bus Registration at 9:30
September 4	Holiday - Labor Day
September 29	Teacher In-service (No School for Students)
October 27	Teacher In-service (No School for Students)
November 2	Parent-Teacher Conferences 1 (No School for Students)
November 16	Parent Involvement Day #1 "Bring Your Parent to School Day"
November 22 - 24	Holiday - Thanksgiving Break
December 22 - January 7	Holiday - Winter Break
January 15	Holiday - Martin Luther King, Jr.
February 19	Holiday - President's Day
February 22	Parent-Teacher Conferences 2 (No School for Students)
March 5-9	Holiday - Spring Break
March 30-April 2	Holiday - Spring Recess
April 12	Parent Involvement Day #2 "Bring Your Parent to School Day"
May 25	Last Day of School

Early Release (Elementary Only)

Note: there are no Early Release Days for NM Pre-K
Classes release early each day at 2:15.

Health and Development screenings are DUE Oct 2.

JANUARY 2018

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FEBRUARY 2018

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MARCH 2018

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May 2018

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NM K-3 PLUS "JUMP START"

Summer Program

Prep & Planning Day: July 3
Program Start: July 5
Day 15: July 25
Program End: Aug 8
mlm 5.9.17

175

Student Instructional Days

184

Teacher Work Days

Instructional Hours =

1006

(Statutory Requirement =900)



2017-2018 SCHOOL CALENDAR (EPS Pre-school)

Board Revision Approval: May 17, 2017

EPS Pre-School Hours:

Morning Session: 8:30-11:25
Afternoon Session: 11:25-2:20

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Teacher Work Days

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(Statutory Requirement =450)

JULY 2017

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