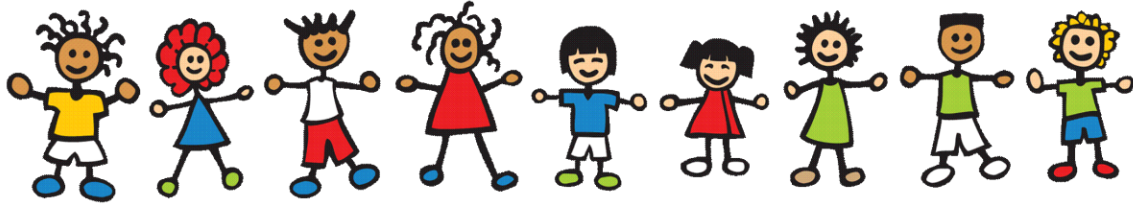




ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

2020-2021





WELCOME TO APS Preschool

VISION STATEMENT

*All Albuquerque Public Schools
early childhood programs provide
exemplary practices in all-inclusive environments.*

MISSION STATEMENT

*The Early Childhood Team will support schools in
implementing developmentally appropriate
best practices, in high-quality
Early Childhood Classrooms for children and their
families.*

PRE-K PROGRAMS



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) with collaborative partners of YDI Head Start and City of Albuquerque Child Development Centers and other Pre-K providers are working to ensure all 4-year old students will have quality Pre-K services through a non-competitive process.

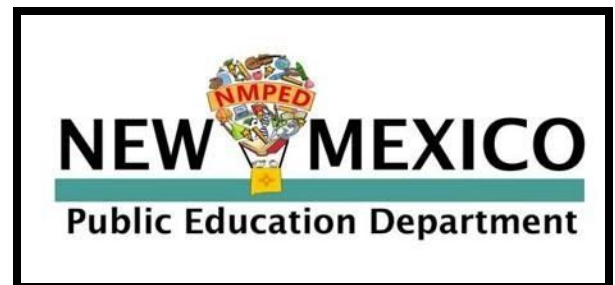
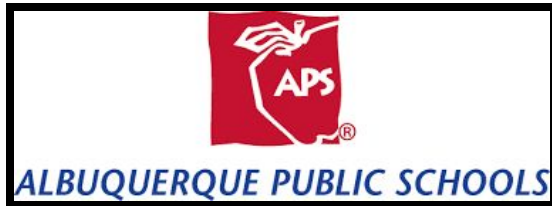


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WHAT IS PRE-K?

Pre-K is an opportunity for children to be successful. Children come to the classroom with previous experience and they have an opportunity with their families to develop positive home school connections as part of their transition process to school age. Pre-K children learn to be learners, how to be curious about how things work and find answers to problems.

Children will have multiple opportunities to have hands-on experiences and opportunities to learn about things that apply to their lives. Teachers will engage children in rich conversations and ask them open-ended questions as part of their intentional teaching lesson planning and interactions to expand on children's learning.

Early Childhood Pre-K curriculum is about socio emotional practices for self-regulation, creating relationships and language development. A Pre-K classroom focuses on things like self-control and behavior in the class. Teachers help practicing how to wait your turn, how to share, how to deal with frustration and how to solve conflicts. Since early childhood, is the beginning of the development of socio emotional skills and the executive functions for self-regulation, staff in Pre-K programs continue supporting the skills that are just beginning to develop at preschool age.

ELIGIBILITY –Pre-K All children served must have reached their fourth (4th) birthday before September 1 of the current calendar year. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the children served must live within the attendance zone of the school with a PreK.

Children starting at age three and up to entry into kindergarten who have Individualized Education Plans (IEP) services are eligible to receive their services within an Albuquerque Public School classroom as agreed upon by the IEP team.

IMMIGRANT STUDENTS REGARDLESS OF DOCUMENTED STATUS

Neither the Constitution of the State of New Mexico nor New Mexico State law establishes citizenship as a requirement for school age children to attend public school in New Mexico. The United States Supreme Court has also ruled that citizenship status cannot be used to deny public school admission to school age children.

Schools **shall not:**

- Deny admission to a school age child on the basis of known, or suspected, undocumented status.
- Engage in any practice to deter or discourage the right of a student to attend public school.

- Require students or parents/legal guardians to disclose or document their immigration status or make inquiries that would expose their undocumented status.
- Require Social Security numbers.

RECRUITMENT and ENROLLMENT

Albuquerque Public Schools is in its fourteenth year with the New Mexico Pre-K grant. We open enrollment to 4-year olds in the Spring of the year prior to starting a Pre-K program. We do not discriminate when selecting student participants based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin nor any other unique demographics of which our community's children represent. Students must, however, live in the attendance zone of the school with a Pre-K.

Details of enrollment can be found on marquees at local Pre-K elementary schools as available. Notifications are posted and can be found on Pre-K elementary school website.

If you would like information regarding Pre-K for your child, please visit www.aps.edu and select Early Childhood on the dropdown menu. You will be contacted via SchoolMessenger from your local elementary school. We also post information to social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

In addition, interested parents may call APS Early Childhood office between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. or leave a message anytime at 505-253-0320. Collaboration efforts between Albuquerque Public Schools Pre-K and other local early learning providers ensure children receive the educational services that meet their needs. APS Pre-K, YDI: Head Start/Early Start, City of Albuquerque Child Development Center, CFYD, along with several private day care centers share the responsibility of locating age appropriate children in our community for participation in an effective early learning educational program. As a reminder, students cannot participate in New Mexico Pre-K in APS and be served in any additional programs funded by CYFD Pre-K. Please check with APS Early Childhood office if you have any questions pertaining to this topic.

APS ParentVue is the registration system that PreK-12th grade uses for beginning the process of enrolling a child into the district.

Parents registering for the first time (never had a child in an APS school or an APS program) will follow these steps:

- Create a ParentVue account. Start by opening your browser and going to <https://enroll.aps.edu>
- Click on more options and choose Create a New Account
- Follow the self-guided process
- Important-select the school year in which your child will begin Pre-K

Parents who have already had a child in an APS school or APS program

- Start by opening your browser and going to <https://mystudent.aps.edu>
- Click on Step 3
- Login with your ParentVue username and password
- Important-select the school year in which your child will begin Pre-K
- Follow the self-guided process

SELECTION/PRIORITIZATION

There are conditions where one child is selected instead of another for participating in an Albuquerque Public Schools PreK program. PreK will consider the following situations, as priority needs when making participant selections:

- Children who live in the attendance area of school with a PreK
- Children who are homeless
- Children who have been served in a Head Start/Early Head Start preschool
- Children who will attend kindergarten in an elementary school designated as Title-1
- Children with identified special needs

IMMUNIZATIONS

New Mexico state statute requires all students be currently immunized before entrance into public school. The school or licensed school nurse shall instruct appropriate personnel in the procedure of recording immunizations in the student's Cumulative Health Record.

STUDENT PRIVACY RIGHTS

Albuquerque Public Schools adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regarding confidentiality of student information. All of our student records are maintained in locked fireproof cabinets. Contact the administrator at your PreK school if you have additional questions.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

If possible, all medications should be given at home. If medications must be given during school hours or during athletic team practices/events, they shall be

administered in compliance with the New Mexico Administrative Code, New Mexico Nursing Practice Act, New Mexico School Health Manual Standards, New Mexico Athletic Trainers Practice Act, and APS Procedural Directive. All medication administration at school requires the parent to provide the appropriate medication authorization form to be completed and signed by the student's parent and/or medical provider.

All APS medication authorization forms are posted on this web page and can be downloaded by parents and or providers for completion. **APS school staff will no longer be able to facilitate completion of these forms by the student's provider.** Providers may require the parent to sign a Release of Information due to HIPAA regulations before completing the Medical Authorization Form for administration of medication at school. Please contact your provider to determine their requirements for completing this school form. Contact your school nurse for additional explanation of these requirements.

ATTENDANCE

Albuquerque Public Schools wants your PreK child to be at school all day, every day. Children develop and grow so rapidly that missed time in school affects both their academic and social development. If a child misses too many days the school will ask for a doctor's note.

We do understand children become ill and may need to stay at home to recover. As parents or guardians, please keep your child home if he/she becomes ill and does not feel well enough to take part in school activities. This helps to prevent the spread of the illness to others at school. These are some of the examples of when your child should be kept home:

- Active vomiting
- Active diarrhea – three or more times in six hours
- The beginning of an airway infection (cold/cough/runny nose) [This is especially important for those who are unable to manage their own body fluids]
- Extreme tiredness and/or lack of appetite
- Fever with headache, body aches, earache, sore throat
- Undiagnosed or unknown rash (a rash that has not been seen or treated by a health care provider)
- Any of the above symptoms with fever or chills
- Untreated skin conditions
- If antibiotic treatment is needed, your child should remain home for the first full 24 hours of medication (e.g., if your child has three doses per day ordered, then three doses must be given before the child returns to school)

Remember to report your child's absence per school reporting process each day he/she is out of school.

- **See-Appendix for Pre-K Chronic Absences Protocol**

PICKING UP A PRE-K STUDENT PRIOR TO THE END OF THE DAY

Identification of Contact for Students Regardless of the reason why a child is being picked up, all contacts for the child will be asked to show a picture ID to school personnel. The safety of your children is always our focus.

TRANSPORTATION FOR PREK

Families of PreK students will drive the student to and from school daily. Bus transportation is provided to those students who have special needs, 504, or meet the requirement of McKinley-Vento Law.

- All special transportation for PreK students will be provided according to terms identified in a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504, or service plan.
- Communication between a student's school bus driver and their parent/guardian is encouraged so that the student's plan is implemented effectively.
- Transportation forms must include all information to ensure safe transportation of students.

Transportation FAQs

Will my child have the same driver every day?

Your child may have different drivers for the morning pick up and afternoon drop off, but every effort is made to ensure that the same driver serves the same students each day.

To whom should I report my address or telephone number change?

The school should be contacted as soon as possible with address or telephone number change information.

Why wasn't I called when the bus was late?

Some of the situations that cause lateness include traffic and road conditions, weather, vehicle breakdowns or a prior bus route being late. Because the district operates nearly 500 buses, it is virtually impossible to contact parents when the bus is slightly late. When a school bus contractor advises the APS Student Transportation Office that one of their buses will be running late, we will contact the school administration office.

Are bus drivers employed by APS?

Yes, some drivers are employed by APS while others are privately held bus companies. APS contracts with 10 bus companies to provide transportation. The district can request that a driver be removed from a route, but employment

decisions are left to the bus companies. Please report any issues regarding drivers to APS Student Transportation Services, and they will work with the company to resolve the situation.

Bus Cancellations/Delayed Start

In the event that it becomes necessary to delay the start of a school day due to weather, or other circumstances, Albuquerque Public Schools is implementing a standardized procedure to cover a “Delayed Start Announcement”. Should it be necessary to implement a delayed start, Albuquerque Public Schools officials will send a school wide phone call through “School Messenger” and will contact the local media sources and inform them to broadcast that “Albuquerque Public Schools will be on a delayed start of school”. This announcement will trigger the following predetermined actions:

- **ALL APS PRE-K STAFF WILL REPORT TWO (2) HOURS LATER THAN THEIR NORMAL REPORTING TIME**



Educational Field Trips

Students must ride the bus to and from the venue of the trip. Family members who are part of the field trip must ride the bus also. Any family member without an approved background check will not be allowed to participate with their child on the school sponsored educational trip

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

- Each day upon arriving in the classroom you will need to have an adult (18 and older) sign your child in and out of the classroom. Please indicate on the sign in sheet if your child will be having home or school lunch.
- Please pick up your child on time. Children that have not been picked up after five minutes will be taken to the school office to wait for their parents.
- Please inform the teachers if you need to bring your child to school late or pick them up early.
- Children will need a light blanket and pillow for rest time. On Fridays, we will send home these items to be washed. Children are asked to bring a special stuffed animal or toy to rest with at rest time. All other toys should stay at home.

- In the event of snow, all families will be notified via Albuquerque Public Schools' SchoolMessenger phone messenger in the event of a two-hour delay or school closure. You can also check the APS website at www.aps.edu for information about delays and cancellations.
- Unless it is below freezing children will be going outside to play on a daily basis please dress your child accordingly with appropriate attire.
- Each family will participate in at least 3 NM Pre-K Family Connection Meeting/Events
- Pre-K staff will conduct at least one home visit as part of the enrollment process and complete a preschool home visitation form.
- The family will fill out the ASQ-3 and ASQ; SE-2 screenings discussed at the home visit and return questionnaires to school within a week. See screenings section.
- Sign in at the office and obtain a Visitor's Badge each time you want to volunteer.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Our Pre-K program is based on a family- centered philosophy that guides all aspects of our program planning and implementation. We believe that families play an important role in their child's academic and social/emotional success. One activity that encourages our home school partnership is our home visits that we conduct at the beginning of each school year. These visits allow children to meet their teachers in their own environment, which helps ease their transition to the school environment and makes them feel more comfortable.

We value the parent-teacher partnership and encourage family members to volunteer in our program. Aside from volunteering in the program, we offer many family engagement activities and field trips throughout the year that we encourage you to attend with your child. These activities may include but are not limited to the following: Each school lists their plan for 90-hours

FAMILY VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

We encourage and welcome parent participation. If you would like to volunteer to help out in the classroom or attend any field trips, you are now required to get an APS background check. APS Pre-K will pay for one background check per family but there is a process to follow. Each Pre-K school will have staff available to support you in the process.

If other family members would also like to volunteer, the cost is \$12 per person. If you would like to apply on your own, the process is online and it is simple to apply. Just go to www.aps.edu/volunteer-with-aps and click on the “Volunteer Now” link to set up an account. This background check needs to be processed within 30 days of entering the program. The background check is good for two years at any APS school.

When volunteering we ask:

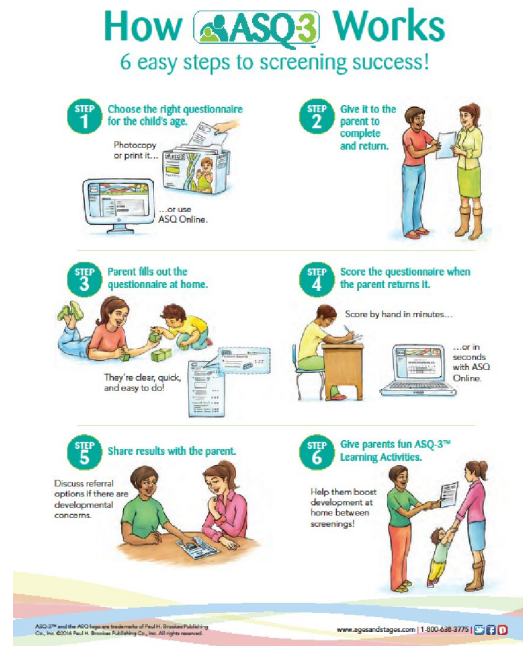
- That you sign in at the office and obtain a visitor’s badge each time you volunteer.
- Please be respectful to teachers and other parents.
- Children cannot be removed from the direct supervision of staff.
- The use of physical contact to reprimand a child is not allowed. Classroom staff will handle disciplinary action.
- Please do not use devices such as cell phones when volunteering.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of children, families, and staff.
- That you refrain from taking photos or videos of other children.

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

The Pre-K teachers conduct developmental screenings of all Pre-K children prior to the third month of attendance. The screenings used in the Pre-K program are the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the ASQ SE. These screening tools provide information about the development of children in six distinct developmental areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, personal-social, and social emotional. The ASQ and the ASQ SE are family friendly screening tools and are completed by families.

Families are an important part of the screening process. When the family completes the questions on the ASQ-3/ASQ: SE they return the forms to the Pre-K teacher. The teacher will score, and analyze the information. Families will be informed of the results.

If indicated, appropriate referrals for further assessments and possible services are made to Child Find. They will look more closely at any area the family noted. All APS Pre-K classrooms provide an inclusive Pre-K setting to accommodate all children's needs.



HEALTH SCREENINGS

Each child in the Pre-K program must receive the following health screenings by a school health care professional within the first three months of attendance. Parents are notified about all results from screenings and appropriate referrals are made to address any identified health concerns.

- physical examination
- current immunization
- vision screening
- hearing screening
- dental screening

If the school nurse contacts you please have your child evaluated as soon as possible, and return the completed form to the school nurse. A general screening is a process that allows identification of physical growth, vision, hearing, or dental concerns. If you do not wish to have your child participate in these yearly screenings, please notify the nurse at your child's school.

MEALS

All school personnel are notified about each child's special nutritional needs including allergies, medical conditions, and physician requests for dietary restrictions. Dining takes place in the school cafeteria.

All APS programs participate in the USDA meal program.

- Two meals are provided per day
- Meals meet USDA requirements
- Families must complete the same forms for meal reimbursements as required of other students in the school, unless students are directly certified or categorically eligible to participate in the free or reduce program.



CHILD FIND

Child Find is part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires states to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities ages 3-21 who are in need of special education services. Albuquerque Public Schools conduct screening and evaluations of preschool-aged children who are suspected of having developmental delays or disabilities in one or more of the following areas: Communication Skills, Cognitive skills, Motor skills, Daily Living Skills, Social/Emotional Skills, Vision, hearing, Orthopedic needs.

Any parent/guardian with concerns about their child's development (speaking, understanding language, learning, eye-hand coordination, movement, socialization, hearing, vision, or any other developmental concern) may contact Child Find for a screening. A child must be at least 3 years old but not eligible for kindergarten yet and be a resident of the Albuquerque Public School District.

Parents/Caregivers must sign consent before the screening can take place. The screening takes about 45 minutes. The screener will play with your child using developmental screening tools. You will be asked questions about things your child may do at home or in childcare. Children will also have their vision and hearing checked. The screener will then talk with the

parents/caregivers about the outcomes of the screening and any next steps to be taken. This may include further evaluation(s) or referrals to other community services.

Albuquerque Public Schools' NM State Pre-K teachers begin to gather important information about the child from the family immediately. The family knows the child best and has the most current information and understanding about their child. Through the Home Visit questionnaire, ~~and~~ Ages and Stages and the Ages and Stages: Social/Emotional Questionnaires (ASQ-3/ASQ:SE), the family provides the Pre-K teacher valuable knowledge about the child's growth and development. This information is gathered and examined to give the Pre-K teacher a profile of learning for that child before the child enters into the classroom. The family and Pre-K teacher meet to discuss the results and the educational plan for Pre-K. In some cases, the information provided by the family may indicate possible developmental concerns that warrant additional screening-

If a student is screened and recommended for further evaluation, the screener will make an appointment with the parents at the screening for the indicated evaluation(s).

After the evaluation, if special education services are being considered, an IEP (Individual Education Plan) meeting will be held. The IEP team, which includes parents/caregivers, IEP specialist, and one or more of the following, Special Education Preschool Teacher, Speech and Language Pathologist, and if indicated an Occupational Therapist and/or Physical Therapist, will review the evaluation results, determine eligibility and write the child's IEP.

Depending on the needs of the student there is a continuum of services available from specialized classes for students with severe disabilities or delays to minimal special education support in a NM State PreK classroom. We also provide Speech Language therapy only for students who demonstrate difficulty with articulation.

For more information or to schedule a screening please call 505 855-993

CURRICULUM

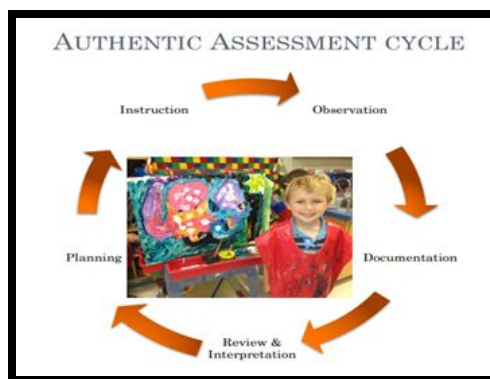
The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines and the New Mexico Essential Indicators are the foundation for teaching and capturing important aspects of children's learning and therefore guides instructional planning.

The preschool day focuses on learning through play. Play is a child's work and it provides children with the opportunity to learn from their environment. Research has shown that children who engage in high quality play experiences can achieve higher levels of cognitive functioning, which positively affects their future academic achievement.

In APS Pre-K classrooms we use the NM Early Learning Guidelines to plan our classroom instruction and Pearson's Opening the World of Learning (OWL). Each child's day includes time for independent work, group meals, outdoor play, and small group activities. Our learning centers consist of: Science, Literacy, Blocks, Art, Writing, Dramatic Play, Table Top activities, and more.

Our Whole Group Time provides opportunities during Story Time for the teacher to read stories, model what 'good readers do', and ask questions about the book. Literacy Cycle is to develop phonological awareness and alphabetical knowledge through group writing, chants, poems, and rhymes. We support the development of the whole child and incorporate both physical activities and social emotional development into our daily lessons.

Using NM Early Learning Guidelines we design lesson plans to meet each child's development needs. We gather information about the child through the use of portfolios and checklist to ensure the child is making progress in meeting age appropriate standards. Children's progress is monitored three times per year using the Early Childhood Observational Tool. (ECOT) The information that is collected through observation and portfolio documentation is shared with each family at scheduled Parent Teacher Conferences.



Caudle, L, Ph.D. (2016, August 4) Effective Authentic Assessment Strategies in Early Childhood and Elementary Classrooms. Retrieved from: https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/TRACS_BT_Symposium_8_4_16AuthenticAssessment

Every child in Albuquerque Public Schools has diverse strengths rooted in their family's unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances. (State of New Mexico, Children, Youth and Families Department, 2010). Through their home language and culture, families share a sense of identity and belonging (McCabe et al, 2013). In a Pre-K environment, materials reflect the culture, language, identity, and reality of the children, families, and communities served. We ensure translators and interpreters participate during important meetings between the school and the home.

Multi-language learners are learning two or more languages and will need linguistic support. It is essential teachers have knowledge of second language acquisition to be able to support the students appropriately through the use of a print-rich labeling of home languages, use of second-language acquisition strategies, building relationships between children, and promote home languages while supporting English language development.

Social emotional development and school success are linked as seen in a growing body of child research. A child's early years set the path for the relationships and successes they will experience for the rest of their lives, making it crucial that children's earliest experiences truly foster—and never harm—their development. During these years, children's brains are developing rapidly, influenced by the experiences, both positive and negative, that they share with their families, caregivers, teachers, peers, and in their communities.

In a Pre-K classroom, the teachers implement strategies to meet a child's social emotional well-being:

- develop their students' self-esteem by using culturally and linguistically best practice
- encourage independence
- promote children's emotional regulation and decision-making skills

TRANSITION PLANS

Transitioning families and their 4-year olds into Albuquerque Public Schools NM Pre-K programs begin with an easy enrollment process. Through collaborative partnerships with private preschool providers within the neighborhoods of the elementary school the process is individualized for families and each elementary school. Each school has planned or already has held registration events. These events are advertised at each existing NM Pre-K school through SchoolMessenger, flyers out into the community, school marquees, and the school's website. Knowledgeable staff members that guide the families through the process of enrolling greet the families. The school's Pre-K Handbook is handed out and questions are answered.

All APS Pre-K students will be part of the Kindergarten through twelfth grade enrollment system of ParentVue. This process is familiar for families who already have older children attending an Albuquerque Public Schools educational program. For families that are new to APS, the enrollment process can be guided via video, handbook, or in

person at each school site. Once enrolled, an APS and State Identification Number is generated for each child.

Once enrolled through the ParentVue registration system the child's enrollment record will move to a holding place where the registration is date and time stamped. Once in the holding area Early Childhood will have access to identify students for a school boundary area to push the registration to the appropriate school. This will ensure that those families living within the Pre-K elementary school's boundary area are enrolled first. This will not be the case if the student has an IEP and LRE services are provided at the school. The ParentVue system will allow for one waitlist across the school district. This will allow families to know that when an opening occurs it will be filled equitably.

Once accepted into a school's Pre-K program, the families are scheduled for a Home Visit at the family's residence or a location of their choice, but not on school property. During this Home Visit that teacher answers questions and asks a series of questions to gather information that will guide the instructional practices for the child to achieve full participation in accessing the Early Learning Guidelines (ELG). During this meeting, the school will validate the knowledge of the family regarding the incoming child thus setting the stage for a positive relationship between family and Pre-K staff with the child at the center. This meeting is followed by a school-planned, first day of Pre-K welcoming, which is open to the family. The first day is an opportunity to create a warm release of the child to the Pre-K staff. A school-wide Open House is scheduled to allow the family to hear from the school's principal and meet additional school staff that supports their child.

During each gathering of family and school staff the conversations begin to transition the child to Kindergarten. Each conversation is guided by the Early Learning Guidelines that move the child towards meeting age appropriate standards for entry into Kindergarten. The 90-hours of Family Engagement both incorporates learning activities and guides the family's understanding of their child's performance targets. Some engagement activities have both whole school and small group learning activities just for the Pre-K family. This begins the process of moving the family from the sheltered learning environment of Pre-K and into the open view of elementary education.

The culminating event for the Pre-K child into Kindergarten occurs during the last month of the Pre-K year. This event is not just for the Pre-K children at the school, but is open to all incoming Kindergarteners to the elementary school. The actual planned event details look a bit different from school to school, however, the overarching theme is "Welcome to Kindergarten". Current Pre-K families will meet and greet the Kindergarten

staff, visit classrooms, and have an informal Q and A. The last day of Pre-K, families are invited to the last celebration of their child as a Pre-K student. Onward to Kindergarten where Albuquerque Public Schools has set aside two days at the beginning of the school year for family and Kindergarten teachers to meet and share their knowledge of the incoming child and the school life of a Kindergarten student. The child comes with the family to this meeting to become familiar with the classroom environment and the Kindergarten staff. The first day of Kindergarten starts with a warm release of the child to the Kindergarten staff.

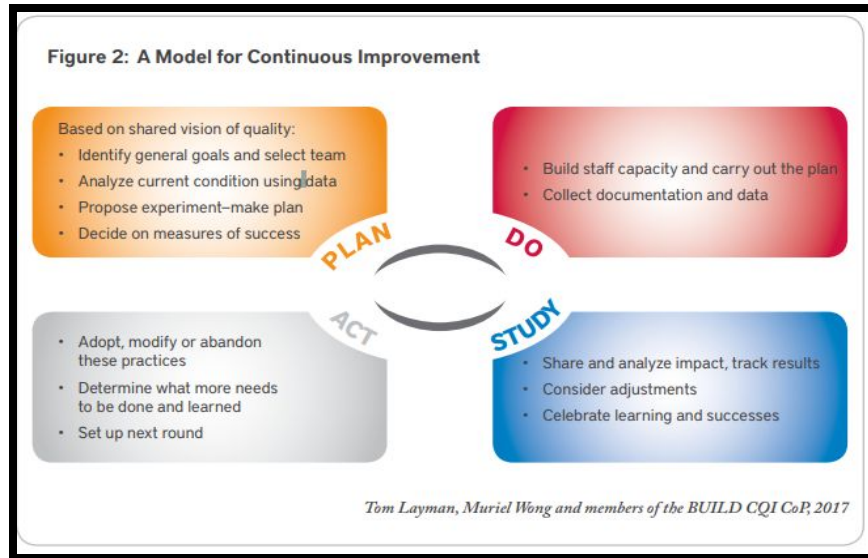


PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To maintain a high level of teaching practices, one day a month Pre-K classrooms will not have classes. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and district Vertical Teams use this time to meet. These groups of educators meet to discuss opportunities to improve instruction and processes.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Each year, each month, each day, we constantly identify procedures and practices that need to be different to make your child's experiences in Pre-K the best for them to be successful. Some of these practices can be changed immediately while others must be planned, implemented, studied, and suggested changes acted upon to make meaningful improvement in our program and classrooms. As part of the New Mexico Pre-K Program Improvement Plan the teacher identifies and sets both short and long-term goals. These goals reflect the individual ambitions of the school and its students. Continuous and enduring progress is based on knowing the site's opportunities for improvement and planning for sustainable growth.



APS wants to ensure families participate in the annual preschool-specific self-assessment, as part of the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process. The Pre-K program efforts are to have a shared vision of quality with families. Family surveys, consensograms, exit slips and observations are part of the ongoing data that programs collect to monitor quality improvement activities. Family feedback is part of the teachers reflections as they work on their goals and plans for improvement.