

Parent Engagement



Parent engagement is an essential component of the PreK program. PreK supports parents as their child's first and most important teacher. All programs must develop a Parent

Engagement Plan. Each program must provide 90 hours of parent engagement activities throughout the school year. PreK families are invited to participate in home visits, parent-teacher conferences, literacy, science and math nights, parent meetings, and family field trips.



Student Meals

All PreK programs provide children with a nutritious meal, either breakfast or lunch. Meal time is a perfect learning opportunity, and teachers use this time to teach skills and to reinforce healthy eating habits. Children learn health and self-help practices such as washing hands and brushing teeth; they learn to set the table and serve themselves. Most programs provide meals family-style to ensure language-rich teacher-child and child-child interactions and to promote positive social skills.

Developmental Screenings

Program staff are trained to detect developmental delay in young, at-risk children. PreK teachers conduct developmental screenings of all PreK children prior to the third month of attendance. Where possible, the dominant language of the child is used during screenings. Parents will be included in the screening process and informed of the results. If indicated, appropriate referrals for further assessments and services are made to the special education department to address all identified concerns. PreK programs provide inclusive settings to accommodate children's needs.

Health Screenings

Each child in the PreK program must receive the following health screenings by a school health care professional prior to the beginning of the program or within the first three months of attendance:

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



Parents have the option to use their own health provider for these screenings. Parents are notified about, and appropriate referrals are made to address, all identified health concerns.



A State-funded, Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program For Four-Year-Old Children



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Literacy and Early Childhood Bureau
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For more information on PreK Programs in public schools, including charter schools, call 505-827-6526 or visit www.newmexicoprek.org

Welcome to NM PreK!



New Mexico PreK is a voluntary program created by the Pre-Kindergarten Act of 2005 and is jointly administered by the Public Education Department (PED) and the Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD). PreK ensures that every child in

New Mexico has the opportunity to attend a high-quality, early childhood education program before entering kindergarten.

The purpose of New Mexico PreK is to

- increase access to voluntary high-quality pre-kindergarten programs;
- provide developmentally appropriate activities for New Mexico children;
- expand access to early childhood programs across New Mexico;
- support linguistically and culturally appropriate curriculum; and
- develop school readiness in those served.

“Children who attend high-quality PreK programs do better in school from the first day of kindergarten through their postsecondary years. Compared with peers who have not completed PreK, they have higher achievement test scores, they repeat grades far less often, they need less special education, they graduate from high school at substantially higher rates, and they are more likely to attend college.”¹

The strategies implemented by New Mexico PreK have shown impressive results that need to be continued and expanded. The most promising and result-driven strategies that have been implemented include:

- utilizing local culture, language, and history in learning activities;
- engaging parents and the extended family;
- using a mixed-delivery system in public schools and in private programs that best meet community and family needs;
- following a grow–your–own model that supports and develops early childhood educators from within the community;
- emphasizing professional development, technical assistance, and mentoring.

PreK teachers carefully plan indoor and outdoor activities based on what children require in order to learn in the following areas:

- listening, language, reading, and writing
- science
- counting, shapes, sorting, and measuring
- coordination, hygiene, health, and well-being
- art, music, and movement
- independence, problem-solving, thinking, and perseverance
- appropriate behavior, social skills, and being part of a group

¹ Transforming Public Education: Pathway to a PreK–12 Future, page 8, The PEW Center on the States, September 2011



Early Learning Guidelines

The NM Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) are the foundation for the PreK curriculum. All activities in the PreK classroom are based on these standards.

- Teachers, educational assistants, and administrators, who work in funded PreK programs statewide, receive training in the PreK model and the ELGs.
- All PreK programs receive regular visits from PreK consultants who assist teachers and administrators to strengthen classroom practice.
- PreK staff implement the curricular cycle which involves planning, observation, reflection, assessment, and individualization to meet the needs of each child.
- PreK teachers use the NM PreK Child Observational Assessment to gauge each child’s progress and to inform their instruction.

