



*Las Cruces Public Schools*  
*Early Childhood Programs:*  
*Making a Difference in the Lives of Young*  
*Children*

**2021-2022**



*LCPS Early Childhood Family Handbook*

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**Las Cruces Public Schools  
Early Childhood Family Handbook**

[www.lcps.k12.nm.us](http://www.lcps.k12.nm.us)

**2021-2022**

**VISION**

Las Cruces Public Schools Early Childhood Programs will promote inclusive developmentally appropriate research-based practices to empower all children to reach their fullest potential in a global society.

**MISSION**

Las Cruces Public Schools Early Childhood Programs will provide equitable opportunities that enable children to increase their school readiness skills for student success. LCPS is committed to creating and sustaining an early learning system that focuses on building high quality, comprehensive programs that form a continuum of integrated services. The PED FOCUS: Essential Elements of Quality, New Mexico's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), provides all public school early childhood program personnel with the criteria, tools, and resources they need to improve and sustain the quality of their program.

**PHILOSOPHY/GOALS/CURRICULAR OBJECTIVES**

We believe the foundation for learning includes the total development of the child. Our goal is to provide developmentally appropriate activities, which meet the social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language needs of the individual child. Believing that children learn through play, we plan our curriculum within a caring and creative environment. The design of the curriculum enhances the child's repertoire of knowledge and skill, to increase self-confidence and to promote social skills. Weekly objectives cover the following areas: social and emotional development, self-help skills, fine and gross motor skills, language development, STEM, numeracy and literacy skills, as well as other kindergarten readiness objectives. Children are encouraged to express themselves through creative art, dramatic play, storytelling, singing, and other hands-on activities. Educational staff are engaged with the collection of authentic observation documentation and curriculum planning to meet the needs of every child.

The Family Handbook is a publication of the Las Cruces Public Schools Early Childhood Programs.

Dear Family,

This handbook will provide you with information to benefit your child and family as your child participates in one of Las Cruces Public Schools early childhood programs. Our program staff are dedicated in providing quality services.

As young children progress through their journey in life, they encounter many challenges. To ensure they have the optimal opportunities to develop in a safe and nurturing environment, our program offers services to support their social-emotional, cognitive, language, and physical development. Parents are their child's first teacher; therefore, our program will provide information and resources that may assist you to make well-informed choices.

Family engagement is essential for enhancing children's learning and family well-being. Family engagement occurs when there is an ongoing reciprocal, strengths-based partnership between families and their children's early childhood education programs (Halgunseth et. al, 2009). Collaborative relationships to empower parents as their child's first teacher will promote children's learning and development. Home visits and parent-teacher conferences will facilitate these endeavors. Families will be invited to participate in educational activities and events throughout the school year.

Our programs collaborate with other educational services and community partners to make your participation in program very rewarding. Your child's holistic development and your family's needs are a priority. Respect towards you and your family will always be a priority. Please respect staff and model for your child, especially while on school premises.

Please remember that the person who drops off and picks up your child needs to have a valid ID and needs to be on the pick-up list in your child's records.

Sincerely,

LCPS Early Childhood Administrative Team

LCPS Preschool Programs

DD Preschool (619): 505 S. Main St., Suite 249, 575-527-6642

Head Start: 755 E. Chestnut Ave., 575-527-6020

NM PreK: 505 S. Main St., Suite 249, 575-527-6624 & 575-527-5873

Child Find: 755 E. Chestnut Ave., 575-527-6076

## **LCPS EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**

Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS) is expanding their early childhood programs to offer quality programs to young children ages three – five years old. LCPS is attaining their vision by implementing the US Department of Education Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs (September 14, 2015). LCPS early childhood programs are diligently working toward providing inclusion services to all children with disabilities, together with their peers without disabilities. We hold high expectations and intentionally promote participation in all learning and social activities. We facilitate individualized accommodations and use evidence-based services that support and foster each child's development (cognitive, language, communication, physical behavioral, and social-emotional, friendships with peers, and sense of belonging.

The following early childhood programs work collaboratively to ensure all children participate in developmentally appropriate learning opportunities.

### **DD Pre (619)**

Section 619 of Part B of IDEA, defines the preschool program that guarantees a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities age three through five. Under this program, preschool children who have disabilities are entitled to Special Education and Related Services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The identification of young children as having any of the conditions, named in Part B of IDEA including Developmental Delays, are eligible to receive services under Section 619 of IDEA. A team, which includes the parent and professionals specializing in evaluating the needs of young children, will assess and review evaluation results, reports and all other pertinent information. This team must carefully consider all information about the child's development and medical history before a decision is made. Eligibility decisions for young children are complex and depend on the consideration of environmental and language factors, in addition to any evaluation results.

### **Head Start**

Head Start is a federally funded program. In order to qualify for Head Start, families must meet the federal low-income guidelines. LCPS Head Start provides preschool comprehensive services for children ages 3-5. Children who qualify for program must be three or four years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current calendar year. Ten percent of enrollment is reserved for children with disabilities. Children in foster care and homeless are categorically eligible to receive Head Start services regardless of income. Up to ten percent of children enrolled may come from over income families. Sixty-six percent of the children served must live within the attendance zone of a Title 1 school.

### **NM PreK**

NM PreK is a state funded program. The program provides preschool comprehensive services for four-year-old children. Children who qualify for program must be four years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current calendar year. Children are selected via random selection.

LCPS early childhood programs are located in all elementary school sites with the exception of the following four elementary schools: Central, Columbia, Fairacres, and Sunrise. To inquire which elementary schools house any of the early childhood programs, please call any of the following programs:

- DD Preschool (619): 505 S. Main St., Suite 249, 575-527-6642
- Head Start/Title I: 755 E. Chestnut Ave., 575-527-6020
- NM PreK: 505 S. Main St., Suite 249, 575-527-6624 or 575-527-5873
- Child Find: 755 E. Chestnut Ave., 575-527-6076

LCPS Early Childhood School Sites	
Alameda Elementary	1325 N. Alameda 527-9486
Booker T. Washington Elementary	755 E. Chestnut Ave. 527-9595
Cesar Chavez Elementary	5300 N. Holman Rd. 527-6022
Conlee Elementary	1701 Boston Dr. 527-9797
Desert Hills Elementary	280 N. Roadrunner Parkway 527-9619
Doña Ana Elementary	5551 Camino de Flores 527-9506
East Picacho Elementary	4450 N. Valley Dr. 527-9516
Hermosa Heights Elementary	655 E. Amador Ave. 527-9530
Highland Elementary	4201 Emerald St. 527-9636
Hillrise Elementary	1400 S. Curnutt St. 527-9666
Jornada Elementary	3400 Elks Dr. 527-9536
Loma Heights Elementary	1600 E. Madrid 527-9546
MacArthur Elementary	655 N. Fourth St. 527-9556
Mesilla Elementary	2362 Calle del Sur 527-9566
Mesilla Park Elementary	955 W. Union Ave. 527-961
Monte Vista Elementary	4915 Peachtree Hills 527-9490
Sonoma Elementary	4201 Northrise Dr. 541-7320
Tombaugh Elementary	226 Carver Rd. 527-9575
University Hills Elementary	2005 Locust St. 527-9649
Valley View Elementary	915 E. California Ave. 527-9586
White Sands Elementary	#1 Viking Street, White Sands 674-1241

**The following section provides information pertinent to the eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance of each early childhood program.**

## **ERSEA (ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE)**

### **Eligibility**

**DD Pre:** Children are eligible to receive special education supports and services if the child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

**Head Start:** The parent/guardian must complete an application with Head Start if they are interested in the program. The selection of eligible children is contingent on the Eligibility Priority Criteria list. The total number of points assigned to each application depends on family risk factors as guided by the Head Start Performance Standards and Head Start Act. The total points assigned to each application determines ranking. The families with the highest points will have priority for placement. Placement of children depends on the availability of classroom slots closest to the child's home school. If an opening is not available, the parent/guardian may decide to enroll their child at another school that has an opening. The parent/guardian may also choose to be placed on a wait list. If a child qualifies but there are no openings in Head Start, the child remains on the wait list.

**NM PreK:** There are two requirements to consider if a child is eligible to participate in the NM PreK program, they are: 1) The child has to be four years old by September 1 of the current school year; and 2) A random selection process is used to identify the NM PreK children.

### **Recruitment**

This process informs parents about the preschool programs offered in LCPS. Throughout the community, informational flyers are posted to advertise the recruitment dates that occur at elementary school sites for Head Start/Title I and NM PreK programs. Information is also announced in school marquees, local radio stations, newspapers, LCPS school websites, other social media platforms, and meetings. Head Start/Title I and NM PreK programs recruitment begins as early as March of each calendar year and continues throughout the calendar year.

**IDEA Part C:** A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with IDEA Part C Agencies ensures children with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria have smooth transition and continuity of services into an early childhood program with Las Cruces Public Schools, as the district complies with all federal and state laws and regulations.

**Child Find:** Throughout the community, informational brochures are furnished. The location of these brochures are at doctor's offices, early intervention agencies and at the Las Cruces Public School administration office. To refer a child suspected of having a developmental delay contact the Child Find Office at 575-527-6076. If a child does not meet eligibility criteria for special education services, information is provided to the family regarding other early childhood programs in the community.

### **Selection**

**DD Pre:** If your child qualifies for the developmentally delayed preschool program, the teacher from your child's homeschool or from the next school closest to your home will call the parent to schedule an

Individualized Education Program (IEP). You will meet with the pre-school staff from the school and develop a program specific for your child's needs.

**Head Start:** Children who apply for the Head Start program are selected based on specific criteria from the U.S. Poverty Guidelines. If a family receives public assistance (TANF or SSI), they become income eligible which is verified by Head Start. The Head Start Office will inform the families if they qualified to participate in the program. Homeless, foster, and migrant children automatically qualify for Head Start services.

**NM PreK:** Children who apply for the NM PreK program are selected based on random selection.

Note: Head Start and NM PreK families are provided with a letter of acceptance when selected to participate.

### **Enrollment**

Parents are required to complete registration online upon receiving a letter of acceptance. LCPS offers assistance with this process. In August before the first day of classes, parents take the Birth Certificate and Immunization Records to the child's school site to finalize enrollment. The following documents must also be completed before the child's first day of school:

- Student Enrollment Information Form
- Nurse Emergency Authorization Form
- Evidence of physical home address (current utility, water, gas or electric bill)
- Proof of guardianship (if applicable)

If parents dis-enroll their child from their early childhood program, they must officially withdraw from the school site and inform their early childhood program and school personnel. The school site's registrar will dis-enroll the child from the district and the program's office staff will dis-enroll the child from the program.

Homeless and migrant families can self-identify through the online registration process. District employees may also refer families throughout the year. The McKinney-Vento staff are responsible in verifying homeless and migratory status. The McKinney-Vento staff will oversee the delivery of resources for children and their family.

### **Attendance**

Families are encouraged to have their children attend school on a regular basis. All children need to arrive on time according to the child's daily schedule. Following a structured daily schedule allows your child to transition with fewer difficulties. DD Pre, Head Start/Title I, and NM PreK full-day programs provide 1,020 hours of instruction. All other DD Pre classes (half-day & self-contained) provide 450 hours of instruction.

Children who attend on a regular basis and up to 90% of the time receive the full benefits of participating in program. When children *are* not feeling well and/or are sick, they are not able to learn. Please keep your child home to minimize the chance of getting other children ill. If your child needs to be out due to an emergency or illness, please contact your child's teacher or school.



If no family member or emergency contacts have been reached after 30 minutes from dismissal time, teacher will notify the school administration and then contact the police at the non-emergency number (575) 526-0795. Teachers must document the incident and the information is provided to the principal and program director.

All early childhood preschool programs follow the Las Cruces Public School District Attendance Procedures which indicates that if a child is not in attendance for 10 consecutive days, the child will automatically be disenrolled from the district. We will work diligently to assist all families. For further information regarding attendance, please visit with the program staff or visit the district's website at [www.lcps.k12.nm.us](http://www.lcps.k12.nm.us).

All LCPS early childhood programs work in collaboration year-round with the district's Child Find Program. Meetings are ongoing to review the Child Find process to provide individualized support to children and their families.

### **FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." To report a concern, contact the Superintendent's Office at 527-5800.

All student records are confidential. Parents need to provide written notice if they grant permission for anyone to view their child's record. If there is an academic need that needs a referral to Child Find, teachers and/or program staff will notify parents and obtain their permission before a referral takes place. LCPS does not discriminate against anyone based on the LCPS Policy. Please refer to the LCPS District website for additional information.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The purpose of the LCPS Non-Discrimination Equity and Cultural Proficiency Policy is to "ensure all students, regardless of the student's or family member's immigration status, can safely access the public education, including all secondary benefits of public education, provided by the district to which they may be otherwise eligible". For additional information, see district website. To report a concern, contact the Superintendent's Office at 527-5800.

### **PHOTO RELEASE**

Parents provide written consent by completing the district forms for school personnel to photograph or videotape children for educational and teacher professional purposes.

### **UNM PHOTO RELEASE**

UNM Center for Development and Disability (UNM-CDD, are asking permission to take photographs and/or to videotape your child during their time in the NM PreK classroom. In order to do this, we must first have

parental/guardian permission to photographs or videotape your child. Copies may be used by the PED or UNM-CDD in ongoing research, reports, or marketing materials to promote New Mexico PreK, etc. Pictures/film of your child may be used for training purposes or in future professional publications.

### **COLLABORATION & COORDINATION**

LCPS has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Doña Ana County Head Start (DACHS) to collaborate and coordinate services. LCPS early childhood programs will invite the DACHS leadership team to the early childhood programs' professional development opportunities.

LCPS early childhood programs collaborates with the following programs and/or agencies as required by the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA):

- LCPS Academic Career Experiences (ACE). ACE is an early work experience program in which students enrolled in LCPS can earn credit toward graduation through participation in an unpaid internship related to a career field of their interest.
- LCPS early childhood programs meet with the Early Childhood Transition Team members quarterly to discuss children who are transitioning from IDEA Part C to B.

### **TRANSITION SERVICES AND EDUCATION**

The following Transition Plan will support children in moving into and on to kindergarten. Children who were participating in a Part C Agency and transitioning into a district preschool program will be invited to participate in an additional meeting. Discussions will be held based on the child's current developmental status. Goals will be determined collectively to assist children in being successful in the district's preschool program.

#### **Beginning of Year Transitions**

Making a smooth transition into the preschool program is an important task for the preschool student and his/her family. Prior to the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians may attend their child's classroom to discuss the schedule, curriculum and procedures. The students are able to meet the teacher with their parents prior to the first day of school. The parents and students have the opportunity to become familiar with the surroundings and to ask any questions to ensure the children receive quality services from all program staff.

#### **End of Year Transitions (Transition to Kinder)**

In May, children in the 4-year-old Early Childhood programs will participate in a "Kinder Transition Day". Children will have the opportunity to visit a kinder classroom during the school day. The kinder teacher will provide hands-on engaging activities representative of a typical kinder day. This experience will facilitate a smooth transition into kinder. All 3-year-old children participating in an early childhood program will partake in a "4-Year-Old Transition Day".

In May, parents will be invited to participate in a transition meeting. This meeting will provide information regarding the upcoming kinder year. The school site principal and/or kinder teacher(s) will be present to provide support and answer questions. If a child is not enrolled in an early childhood program at their home school, arrangements will be made for families to attend their child's home school.



## CURRICULUM

**Three Cheers for Pre-K, a complete pre-k literacy curriculum and is aligned to the early learning standards.** It's the all-new Pre-Kindergarten curriculum that helps you get young children ready for Grade K! Skills-based experiences and purposeful play initiate learning around quality children's literature. It's fun and effective with multisensory activities and amazing interactive digital content. A Family Engagement web portal includes learning games and helpful tools for parents and caregivers. The rich concept development activities in **Three Cheers for Pre-K** are mirrored in **Uno, dos, tres ¡Prekínder!** to support multilingual learners.

The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines were designed to be used for the benefit of children and families. The developmental expectations were identified to help educators assist each child to reach his or her maximum potential and to communicate clearly with families about how their child is growing and learning, what steps are being taken to enhance his or her early learning experience, and to address the family's goals and concerns. For additional information, refer to the following website:

<https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Early-Learning-Guidelines-with-head-start-goals-added-in-final.docx>



## Kimochis

Kimochis are communication tools that help kids manage feelings in positive ways to promote well-being and success in school and life. Sometimes kids (and adults) have strong feelings that can fuel challenging behaviors. Sometimes it's hard to know how to communicate when you are in an emotional moment. Kimochis are a playful way to help children (and adults!) learn how to identify and express feelings. When kids can communicate their feelings effectively, they develop positive social skills that lead to lasting friendships and success in all aspects of life. Kimochis teach the fourth "R"—reading, writing, arithmetic, and RELATIONSHIPS. This "R" is the foundation for success in ALL areas of life.



Early Childhood programs will use a research-based curriculum, implement elements and practices of LETRS and Heggerty, evidence-based strategies for improving overall reading outcomes for all children, continue using the Early Childhood Observation Tool (ECOT) for on-going student assessment, promote inclusion opportunities in all early childhood programs district wide, and share the child's development during home visits and parent-teacher conferences, or as needed.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS**

The developmental screenings will be completed within the first three months of attendance. The results will be shared with families individually at parent-teacher conferences and/or home visits. Teachers collaborate with families in providing children with strategies and/or activities to support their academic learning. Later, the teachers will meet with parents to discuss progress and follow-up concerns. If concerns continue, a referral packet will be completed by the classroom teacher. The developmental screeners consist of Ages & Stages-SE and Ages & Stages-3.

### **HEALTH SCREENINGS**

The following health screenings are offered by program, but staff will obtain written permission from parents before they are conducted: Vision and Hearing, Colorblindness, Height and weight. Parents are welcome to provide current screening documentation from their medical or dental health provider to their early childhood teacher. Any health concerns will be followed up by a school personnel.

School Health: Dispensation of Over-the-Counter Medications

Medication will be dispensed only according to Policy and Regulation JLCD (Regulation JLCD-R *Administering Medicines to Students*) and a medication administration plan. All prescribed medications for children must have a label on it except for a child's EpiPen.

All early childhood programs adhere to the LCPS Health Services policies and procedures.

Healthy Habits for Children:

- Hand washing on a regular basis
- Getting enough sleep
- Covering your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough
- Brushing teeth
- Eating fruits and vegetables
- Getting physical activity every day

Healthy children are more capable of reaching their potential. A child who is not feeling well is not able to learn. Families are encouraged to:

- Families are encouraged to complete well-child exams which includes medical and dental examinations and receive follow-up treatment as needed.
- Maintain current immunizations (required prior to the child's entry into the classroom).
- Head Start and NM PreK staff will assist parents to obtain appointments, transportation and medical coverage. Our goal is to provide every child with a "medical home" that will allow access to medical services after the child leaves our program. Parents are involved in their child's health by preparing their children for screenings and exams, giving authorization for their child to receive health services, scheduling and accompanying their children to appointments, and by participating in parent trainings. Teachers support students to establish healthy habits in the classroom with daily tooth brushing and an emphasis on hand washing and education on health and nutrition.

### **LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS COVID-19 REPORTING AND RESPONSE PLAN 2020**

In these unprecedented times, Las Cruces Public Schools strives to remain a place of comfort and consistency for our students and staff. It is important to us that we provide clarity regarding our district's COVID-19 response plans so campus staff may design protocols to protect the safety and health of our students and staff. Campus leaders will work with their staff to ensure the implementation of these guidelines throughout the school year.

#### **Guiding Principles**

- Create, implement, practice and ensure safety guidelines in the classroom and on all school campuses.
- Practice social distancing, proper mask usage and student health.
- Provide clear structures to support academic growth.

#### **SAFETY**

All elementary schools have administrators on site to oversee safety of staff and children. At all elementary sites, licensed nurses are assigned full time to assist and oversee with any safety and/or medical concerns. Classroom environments both indoor and out are kept clean and receive regular maintenance to ensure the safety of all children.

Administrators conduct periodic drills at school to teach children what to do in the event of a fire, tornado, or crisis situations. Teachers and students practice proper procedures regularly to ensure preparation in the case of emergency.

Parents are encouraged to cooperate with law enforcement and school officials during school emergencies to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Routine school procedures may change during an emergency. Emergencies could include: fire, lockdowns, shelters-in-place, bus accidents, severe weather, disturbances in the adjacent neighborhoods, and more. Please make sure emergency information is correct complete and

current on your child's school records. When you move, change phone numbers, or change emergency contact names, contact the school immediately.

Schools provide emergency information to local radio and TV stations, and additional information is located at the top of the LCPS website ([www.lcps.k12.nm.us](http://www.lcps.k12.nm.us)) with instructions of procedures to keep parents informed. LCPS Central Office staff provide media outlets with closures or late starts due to severe weather conditions; this information is also located on the LCPS website.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

All early childhood programs support children to participate in a safe and nurturing environment. The Kimochis Curriculum and the NM Pyramid Model Framework are used to reinforce social-emotional development. The curriculum embeds strategies for children to support their well-being. Staff are available to help teachers and parents encourage positive behaviors, which move children in the direction of cooperation, making friends, making appropriate choices, and coping with life's challenges.

### **Self-Esteem**

Children use different types of information to form their self-image. Through their relationships with other people, particularly parents, they make judgments regarding their own importance. Children misinterpret a reaction or assign it more importance than is justified.

### **Suggestions:**

- Encourage the children to make choices, express themselves, and practice independence.
- Spend more time praising good behavior and less time punishing bad behavior.
- Provide a positive environment allowing the child to express their feelings.
- Do not embarrass or correct the child in front of others.
- Set aside time each day to talk and play with your children.
- Show your child that you accept them for who they are by providing warmth and physical signs of your love.

### **Clothing Information**

Please bring a change of clothes for your child for warm and cool weather. Children should be appropriately dressed to ensure they enjoy their classroom activities. Messy activities are part of the activities at school; therefore, do not send children in clothing that cannot get dirty. For children who are not completely toilet trained, they need two sets of complete changes of clothes. All clothing should be marked with the child's name and they are kept in the child's cubby. A toileting plan is completed for any child needing toileting assistance. Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) diapering guidelines indicate all children will be appropriately cared for at all times. The programs follow the guidelines as specified under the ECERS.

## **NUTRITION & FOOD SERVICE**

Children who have healthy bodies have healthy minds. Early childhood programs receive free meals from LCPS Department of Nutrition Services, meet USDA guidelines, and is prepared on site. Children will participate in family style and no food will be permitted to leave the school setting. Food will not be used as a punishment or reward. All children on a prescribed diet by a physician must bring written documentation to the nurse assigned to the school. A meeting will occur between the parent and school personnel. Any student allergies, medical conditions, and physician requests for dietary instructions are also needed to ensure protocols are in place.



## **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

Our plan for families includes offering 90 hours of activities that includes a home visit, parent-teacher conferences, school and community-based activities to enrich their child's academic program. Families will provide input and recommendations for topics presented at family events. Program staff will provide resources to assist families to document their child's growth and development in the natural routines and activities in the home. Fathers and/or male role models will also be invited to participate in events to engage them with the child(ren) enrolled in program. Families will complete an evaluation at the end of each activity and the data results will be included in the DCQ plan. Some of the family engagement hours consist of:

### **Parent Visits to Classrooms**

Parents are welcomed to visit classrooms as desired. It is necessary for you to take into consideration that situations where you need to talk extensively with the teacher be scheduled outside instructional time. All visitors are required to first sign in at our front office. You will be given a visitor's pass to wear while you are on campus.

### **Home Visits**

Each preschool teacher schedules visits to each individual child's home prior to the first day of school. Not only do the children and families get to meet their teachers, but our teachers and parents are given the opportunity to learn any pertinent information for the design and development of instruction so children are set up for a successful school year. Home visits for homeless or migratory families will be offered an alternate location if needed. Head Start requires two home visits. DD Pre and NM PreK require one home visits. Due to COVID-19, each home visit may be in person or via zoom.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent conferences with teachers are scheduled close to the date that Authentic Observations and we also abide by the Parent/Teacher Conference dates as outlined in the district calendar. Classes are not held on these days, but you may bring your child with you if needed. Teachers will ensure to select a time that fits

your schedule. Head Start requires two parent/teacher conferences. DD Pre and NM PreK requires three parent/teacher conferences.

A minimum of four annual family engagement activities/events outside of classroom hours. The classroom teacher will provide the parents with a two week notice of any scheduled events.

### **Parent Trainings**

We are committed to assist families in their role as “first teachers”. Parent trainings will focus on the essential indicators. We will inform you of trainings at least two weeks in advance to ensure you have enough time to make arrangements to attend. The trainings are designed to meet a variety of criteria:

- Be interactive with families
- Model and support developmentally appropriate strategies
- Provide materials and supplies to parents
- Involve the Pre-K student for demonstration
- Include opportunities for various disciplines
- Be FUN and ENGAGING

A guide for parents is located at the following website: <https://families.ped.state.nm.us/>

Program staff also work with each family to identify and reach their goals. The focus in meeting the goals is using your family strengths. Program staff are available to help with resources based in the community to connect families with local services and supports. Some of the resources include:

- Financial Literacy, Nutrition, Parenting, Literacy and Language Classes
- Helping identify concerns and needs and help families meet their goals.
- Encouraging and supporting the family’s efforts to obtain the quality services deserved.
- Developing goals and strategies that the family identifies as areas for personal growth.
- Supporting families with child development and discipline issues.
- Providing funds for GED, ESL classes (limited funds).
- Trainings/workshops through partnerships with area agencies.
- Trainings conducted during Parent Committee meetings.
- Trainings and workshops offered on interests expressed.

### **Policy Council and Parent Committee Meetings**

#### **Policy Council**

Head Start Policy Council parents are involved in the shared governance of the program. Parents have a voice in major program decisions including such things as recruitment and selection process, policies and procedures, budget, and funding proposals. Leadership Training occurs at the beginning of each year to Policy Council elected members. NM PreK parents will be invited to participate as community members. Program parents will vote and select one parent from each Head Start classroom to become a Policy Council



member. NM PreK will go through the same process but these parents will be selected to serve as a community member.

Additional responsibilities include:

- Being informed and keeping parents informed about issues facing the Policy Council.
- Attending meetings regularly and notify staff in advance if you are unable to come.
- Advocating for the best interests of all Head Start families.
- Attending Parent Committee Meetings and representing parent concerns to the Policy Council.
- Attending trainings and sharing the information with other parents.
- Planning, coordinating, and organizing agency-wide activities for parents/guardians with the assistance of staff.
- Be on working committees that help the Head Start Program.

### **Parent Committee Meetings**

Parents elect Policy Council Representatives at the Parent Committee meetings. The Parent Committee meetings are the vehicle of communication from Policy Council to parents. All Parent Committee meetings which are held at their child's school site. These meetings help parents collaborate with each other, test ideas and participate in leadership and decision-making experiences. They are also a great way to plan, coordinate and organize program activities for parents (with assistance from staff) and to advise staff in the development and implementation of local program policies activities and services.

### **Volunteer**

Parent engagement is an integral part of a successful program for you and your child. Research suggests that children do better in school when their parents are involved. Parents interested in volunteering in the classroom must complete a background check. Volunteers must comply with the LCPS policies and regulations. The policy requires volunteers to complete all forms contained in the Volunteer Packet, which includes the following:

- FBI background check
- Fingerprinting
- Waiver statements and volunteer information sheet

The LCPS Human Resources Department will notify the school site staff if the volunteer's FBI background check returns with no discrepancies. When Human Resources have cleared volunteers, they will receive appropriate identification to present at the school site. The volunteer Handbook, volunteer Packet, and guidelines are available online at

[www.lcps.k12.nm.us/Departments/CommunityjRelations/volunteers.shtml](http://www.lcps.k12.nm.us/Departments/CommunityjRelations/volunteers.shtml)

Parents may also volunteer in the classroom by:

- Reading or telling a story
- Getting materials ready to use in the classroom or completing a project at home
- Helping clean

Volunteering helps parents:

- Learn new skills
- Make new friends, have some fun
- Gain confidence
- Become aware of community resources and build your support system
- Learn job/employment skill
- Help your community be a better place to live

### **Family Surveys**

Families will be provided with the opportunity to provide input for continuous program quality improvement in an effort to support each child's full potential. Results will be shared via a program newsletter.

### **Positive Guidance**

When young children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline.

**We will:**

- Praise and encourage children
- Set reasonable limits for children
- Model appropriate behavior for children
- Modify the classroom to attempt to prevent problems before they occur
- Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to children
- Provide children with simple rules and clear directions for following them
- Respect your child's feelings and emotions
- Ignore minor misbehaviors
- Explain things to children on their level
- Provide consistency in our positive guidance plan

**We will not:**

- Use any type of physical, threatening, or otherwise abusive behaviors when working with children
- Shame or punish children when bathroom accidents occur
- Leave the children alone, unattended or without supervision
- Inappropriately discipline children

When children are engaged in developmentally appropriate activities, few discipline problems occur. However, when children do behave inappropriately the staff will intervene with constructive solutions. Primary methods of discipline are intervention and redirection. Praise and positive reinforcement of good behavior are strategies used with all children as methods to build the child's self-esteem and encourage self-control. Conflict resolution is another method used with all of the children when necessary. Parents receive notice on a regular basis concerning their child's behavior and social development.

Parents receive immediate notification if their child's behavior consistently endangers his/her own safety or the safety of others. We will do our best to work with your child and family to make your child's experience a happy one.

Early Childhood Programs use the evidenced based practice of the New Mexico Pyramid Framework for social-emotional well-being of each child.



## Parent Tips

**Tips for dealing with challenging behavior:** It is easy to become frustrated and angry with a child who is not behaving. When you become angry, remember the following tips:

- Do not discipline out of anger; step away from the situation and cool off
- Take a few deep breaths and count to 10
- Phone a friend or family member
- Take a quick walk or change the environment
- Be consistent in your discipline
- Hitting, spanking or slapping are not appropriate ways to discipline
- Do not compare your children with each other or to other children
- Everyone is unique and should be respected at all times

- Let your child talk through his or her feelings
- Praise your child for doing something good
- Show love and affection to your child
- Remember —you are the adult
- Seek outside help if you need it

**Literacy:**

- Read to children at least once a day. Ask questions as you read. It is best to ask questions that do not require a yes or no answer, for example, “Where do you think the duck is going?”
- Make reading a part of your routine, such as, during bedtime. Tell stories, sing and share rhymes
- Discuss stories and relate them to their own lives. For example, you can talk about what your child has in common with the main character. Another example is if you read a book about ducks, go to the duck pond and then talk about the book
- Provide a variety of paper, writing and art tools
- Encourage children to draw pictures and tell stories that go with the pictures, you may write the child’s story after the picture is drawn
- Take children to the library (most libraries have a story hour)
- Preschoolers often learn how to read by memorizing the words
- Provide children with a range of things to read such as, books, catalogs, magazines, calendars, etc.
- Let children read to you (this may mean that they repeat the parts of the story that they remember)
- Talk about signs, letters, and names

**TRANSPORTATION**

Families provide transportation for students enrolled in Head Start or NM PreK. Consideration of transportation, as a related service, is offered to qualifying students enrolled in a DD Preschool Program as part of the child’s IEP.

**LCPS Early Childhood Family Calendar 2021 - 2022**

August-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
					Teacher Work Day	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Home Visit	Transition Day	Class	Class	Class	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
29	30	31				
	Half Day	Class				

September-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
			Class	Class	Class	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Labor Day Holiday	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Parent Teacher Conference	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
26	27	28	29	30		
	No Class	Class	Class	Class		

October-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
					Class	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Half Day	Class	Class	Fall Break	Fall Break	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	

November-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Half Day	Class	Class	Veteran's Day Holiday	Class	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Thanksgiving Holiday					
28	29	30				
	Half Day	Class				

December-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
			Class	Class	Class	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Half Day	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Winter Break					
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Winter Break					

**LCPS Early Childhood Family Calendar 2021 - 2022**

January-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Winter Break	School Site PD	District PD/ Site PLCs	District PD/ Site PLCs	Teacher Work Day	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
30	31					
	Half Day					

February-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		Class	Class	Class	Class	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	President's Holiday	Half Day	Class	Class	Parent Teacher Conference	
27	28					
	No Class					

March-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		Class	Class	Class	Class	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Spring Break					
27	28	29	30	31		
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class		

April-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
					Class	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Spring Holiday	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Spring Holiday	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	

May-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Parent Teacher Conference	Parent Teacher Conference	No Class			
29	30	31				

**LCPS Early Childhood Family Calendar 2021 - 2022**

August-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
					Teacher Work Day	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Home Visit	Transition Day	Class	Class	Class	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
29	30	31				
	No Class	Class				

September-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
			Class	Class	Class	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Labor Day Holiday	No Class	Class	Class	Class	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Parent Teacher Conference	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
26	27	28	29	30		
	No Class	Class	Class	Class		

October-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
					Class	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	No Class	Class	Class	Fall Break	Fall Break	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
31						

November-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	No Class	Class	Class	Veteran's Day Holiday	Class	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Thanksgiving Holiday					
28	29	30				
	No Class	Class				

December-2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
			Class	Class	Class	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	PM Session	Class	Class	Class	AM Session	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Winter Break					
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Winter Break					

## LCPS Early Childhood Family Calendar 2021 - 2022

January-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Winter Break	School Site PD	District PD/ Site PLCs	District PD/ Site PLCs	Teacher Work Day	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday	No Class	Class	Class	Class	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
30	31					
	No Class					

February-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		Class	Class	Class	Class	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Half Day	Class	Class	Class	Class	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Presidents Day Holiday	No Class	Class	Class	Parent Teacher Conference	
27	28					
	No Class					

March-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		Class	Class	Class	Class	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Spring Break					
27	28	29	30	31		
	No Class	Class	Class	Class		

April-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
					Class	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Spring Holiday	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Spring Holiday	No Class	Class	Class	Class	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	

May-2022						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	No Class	Class	Class	Class	Class	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Parent Teacher Conference	Parent Teacher Conference	No Class			
29	30	31				