

Farmington Preschool Academies



Family / Student Handbook

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Farmington Preschool Academy South (formerly NM PreK Esperanza)
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Website: <http://preschool.fms.k12.nm.us>

Principal: Andrea Garcia

Lead Teacher: Tanisha Edwards

Secretaries: Debbie Brogan and Arlene Chacon

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Table of Contents

<p>Page 3 Farmington Preschools Mission Statements Goals Contacts</p> <p>Page 4 Times - Hours of Operation Family Curriculum Mondays</p> <p>Page 5 Family Engagement Calendar Phone Calls Duty Free Lunch Online Registration Snow Policy</p> <p>Page 6 AM/PM Sessions Picking Up From Preschool Immunization Records, Birth Certificates Proof of Residency, Medicaid Cards</p> <p>Page 7 Health Screenings Immunization Law Student Health Records Medications</p> <p>Page 8 Illness, First Aid, Medication Safety Plan Emergency Drills FPA Classroom Placement</p> <p>Page 9 Farmington Preschool Academy East (FPA East) FPA East Peer Students FPA East Transition to Kindergarten FPA East Transportation</p> <p>Page 10 FPA East Transportation FPA East Attendance FPA South and West Application and Enrollment</p> <p>Page 11 FPA South and West Attendance NM PreK Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance, Availability of Program and How Families are Notified FPA South and West Recruitment</p> <p>Page 12 FPA South and West Priorities for Enrollment FPA South and West Transportation</p> <p>Page 13 FPA South and West Transportation Preschool Waivers</p> <p>Page 14 Confidentiality Family Participation Parent Support Groups Surveys Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)</p> <p>Page 15 Advisory School Council Volunteer Program Newsletters Special Notes</p> <p>Page 16 Notebooks / Folders Medicaid in Schools Indian Education Legal Issues Notice- NM Children's Code 32-4-3</p> <p>Page 17 Clothing Needs/Diapers Disciplinary Policy</p>	<p>Page 18 Disciplinary Policy Art Activities Show and Tell Independent Dressing Skills</p> <p>Page 19 Meals: Breakfast and Lunch English Language Learners</p> <p>Page 20 FOCUS Early Learning Guidelines Essential Indicators/Portfolios</p> <p>Page 21. Preschool Literacy Program Preschool Curriculum</p> <p>Page 22 Preschool Curriculum</p> <p>Page 23 Homework/Assignment Policy</p> <p>Page 24 Homework/Assignment Policy Daily Routines</p> <p>Page 25 Professional Qualifications</p>
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**FARMINGTON MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS
FARMINGTON PRESCHOOLS**

Farmington Municipal School District offers two public preschool programs at three sites. All preschools follow the **NM PreK FOCUS** criteria and **Early Learning Guidelines** with **Essential Indicators**.

Farmington Preschool Academy East (FPA East) is for students ages three to five who have a documented educational need for special education services. These students have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) with goals that are written in the area(s) in which s/he qualifies. Peer students who model behavior and language also attend.

Farmington Preschool Academies South and West (FPA South and FPA West) are NM Public Education funded sites that serve Farmington students who are typically developing as well as students with IEPs during their year immediately preceding kindergarten. Students must be four years old on or before August 31st of the current year and reside in Farmington Municipal School District.

MISSION STATEMENTS

FARMINGTON MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS— We will use a system of quality data-driven instruction to ensure a culture of high performance for all students and staff.

FARMINGTON PRESCHOOLS— To provide children and their families a safe and nurturing learning environment that supports the whole child in developing the necessary skills to construct their own knowledge and be prepared for a successful transition to kindergarten.

GOALS for the Preschools

- A. Foster emergent literacy and math skills.
- B. Support learning in each of the developmental areas.
- C. Promote family and community involvement.
- D. Encourage teamwork.
- E. Celebrating diversity.

Contacts:

Andrea Garcia, Preschools Principal
Tanisha Edwards, Lead Teacher

505-599-8625 / 505-599-8744
505-599-8625 / 505-599-8744

TIMES

Staff Report:	7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Monday – Friday
Students report for AM session:	8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Tuesday – Friday
Staff Lunch:	11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Tuesday – Friday
Students report for PM session:	11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Tuesday – Friday

Please pick up your child by 11:00 a.m. for AM class and stay with your child until 11:30 a.m. for PM class

FAMILY CURRICULUM MONDAYS

Mondays are used for professional development, PLCs, screenings, parent conferences, paperwork, planning, cleaning, evaluations and meetings. There are no classes for any Farmington Preschool students on Mondays. On Family Curriculum Mondays, all preschools invite your families to come to your child's preschool sometime between **8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.** We will be hosting activities for both you and your children. They include focus on various preschool programs and curricula and essential indicators. Please let us know of any topics you are interested in learning more about. This time is set aside for you to just drop in and you won't need to stay the whole time. The following dates are our Family Curriculum Mondays and are on our district preschool calendar:

September 17

October 15

November 12

December 17

January 28

February 25 / March 11

April 15 / May 6

Preschools follow the same school calendar as other schools in Farmington with the exception of no AM nor PM sessions for preschoolers on Mondays and session beginning and ending dates. FMS district and preschool calendars are available on the district and preschool websites. Be sure to read our monthly newsletters for specific information.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR

August:	Home Visits	28 hours
	Open House	2.5 hours
November:	Celebrate Culture Fair	2 hours
November:	Family Conferences	8.5 hours
TBD:	Fall Book Fair	9 hours
February:	Family Conferences	8.5 hours
March:	Literacy Fair	2 hours
TBD:	Spring Book Fair	9 hours
May:	Family Conferences	11 hours
Aug-May	Family Curriculum Mondays	27 hours

PHONE CALLS

The preschool staff encourages phone calls to keep communication open. Teachers are available from 7:30 a.m. - 7:55 a.m. and after school from 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. When these times are honored, the students receive all of our attention when they are here. Our secretaries will take messages for the staff during the day. Phone conferences regarding students need to be scheduled between 7:30 a.m. - 7:55 a.m. and 2:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Thank you for being respectful of these times.

DUTY FREE LUNCH FOR STAFF

New Mexico State Law requires educational staff be given 30 minutes lunch break that is duty free and without the presence of children. Children therefore, must be picked up prior to 11:00 a.m. and not dropped off before 11:30 a.m. Emergencies are understandable and accommodations will be made, please talk to classroom teacher. If you find yourself and your child at the preschool early be prepared to supervise your child until staff is ready.

ONLINE REGISTRATION

Farmington Municipal Schools requires mandatory online registration for each student. You need an email address and our secretaries will assist you if needed. You may use a preschool Kiosk computer to enroll your child. Proof of Residency is required every year. To register your child, visit the Online Registration page at: <http://district.fms.k12.nm.us/Registration/>

SNOW POLICY

During winter, the snow can get bad enough to delay or cancel school. Listen to the radio and television to stay well informed. Their announcements begin early in the morning and update often. If school is delayed, there will be no AM preschool session; PM session will be held. If school is canceled for the

Farmington District, that includes the preschool. If you have a current phone number on file notification will also be made through the automated School Messenger System.

AM/PM SESSIONS

Our students are divided into morning and afternoon groups. We spend a great deal of time working out the schedule and want to share some of our reasons for placement. Please understand that our primary consideration is your child's educational needs. Many times this assignment must be based on:

- A. Transportation Issues: Where children reside at times may require AM placement. Specific outlying areas around Farmington may be scheduled to come in the morning so buses can get them home in a reasonable amount of time.
- B. Medical Concerns: Children with medical concerns may need a certain session based on medication, schedules, nursing assignment, etc.
- C. Age: Very young children, who still nap, may need to come in the AM. We try to accommodate parent requests for AM or PM placement, but please understand that it's not always possible. If you would like to make a change, you may submit your request in writing to the teacher who will consult with the building principal.

PICKING-UP FROM PRESCHOOL

In the event you need to pick your student up from preschool, rather than have him/her ride the bus, please notify the teacher prior to the regular departure time. Phone contact or written notice in the communication notebook will suffice. If anyone other than a parent/guardian is to pick up your student, we require that you inform the teacher of the name of this person. We will also require this individual to provide photo identification (driver's license) before releasing the student to them and must be included on the enrollment card, which the parent completes at the first meeting and annually thereafter.

Please check in at the office to sign your child out prior to picking them up.

IMMUNIZATION RECORDS, BIRTH CERTIFICATES, PROOF OF RESIDENCY AND MEDICAID CARDS

School policy requires that all students have current immunizations to attend the preschool. We must have a copy of your student's records on file at all times. If your child receives shots during the year be sure to send us an updated copy of the immunization record, which the nurse will review.

State immunization requirements are: Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine, Diphtheria-tetanus-whooping cough (DPT or DTaP) immunization, four

doses; polio vaccine, three doses; Hepatitis B, three doses; Hib, and Varicella vaccine or history of having had chicken pox.

Upon enrollment you are required to bring the original birth certificate, which we will use to record information and return to you plus Medicaid card (if applicable). This will help transition to kindergarten and provide documentation of birth date, school attendance zone and legal name.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

All children will receive a health screening within three months of the first day of school. This includes height, weight, dental, vision, and hearing checks. You will be informed immediately if there are concerns noted. Otherwise, you will receive information about the health screening and the developmental (ASQ) screening (for NM Prek students) during your first parent teacher conference in October or November. Feel free to contact the teacher or the office if you have questions or concerns.

IMMUNIZATION LAW- It is unlawful for any student to be enrolled in school unless he or she has been immunized, as required under the rules of the Health and Social Services Department and can provide satisfactory evidence of such immunization. Immunization requirements may be obtained by visiting the New Mexico Immunization Program website at: www.immunizenm.org/sched.shtml or by calling the NM Vaccine & Flu Hotline at: 1-866-681-5872. Immunization requirement schedules are also available in each school health office.

STUDENT HEALTH RECORDS Health records will be kept on all students in the nurse's office. These records will be part of the educational record and will be shared with school staff on a need to know basis only.

MEDICATIONS - Medications will be administered at home whenever possible. The student receiving prescribed medication at school must have a **"Permission Form for Administering Medications in the Schools"** signed by a physician and parent/guardian. This authorization shall include name of student, name of medication, strength and prescribed dosage, route of administration, and time schedule for administration. Each authorization for administering medications shall be valid only for the current school year. In addition, the parent(s) must provide a telephone number by which the parent may be reached in the event of an adverse reaction to the drug. Non-prescription medications may not be administered without prior written parent or guardian consent. All medications shall be administered under the supervision of the school nurse who shall also prescribe the procedures and records to be utilized.

ILLNESS, FIRST-AID, MEDICATION

A student with a fever should not be sent to school and should not return after an illness until he/she has been **free of fever without medication for 24 hours**. Contagious diseases should be reported to the school nurse or classroom teacher. Immediate first aid will be given by the school in cases of accident or sudden illness. Parents will be notified. 911 will be called in case of emergencies beyond training of preschool staff. Parents will also be notified. The administration of any drugs will not be done at school unless requested specifically, in writing from a physician, for a particular student.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school and keep a student at home if he/she exhibits any of the following: severe cough/cold, fever, respiratory symptoms accompanied by fever, sore throat, diarrhea/vomiting in 24 hours, red matted or draining eyes, skin eruptions/rash.

Emergency phone numbers are mandatory. We need **at least** two phone numbers for each student. We will always attempt to contact parents first.

SAFETY PLAN

The preschools have a Safety Plan to help protect your children. First Aid and CPR trainings are completed every two years for staff. A district wide response plan has been developed to deal with emergencies. It is very important that you keep preschool staff aware of emergency phone numbers in case you need to be notified. Fire Drills are practiced weekly during the first month of school and thereafter on a monthly basis. At least three of these drills include Bomb Threat, Lock Down and/or Shelter-In- Place.

All outside doors, with the exception of the one of the main entrance doors are locked at all times. **All visitors must check in and out via the school office, where they sign in and out and are issued a visitor's badge.**

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Students will be informed of the appropriate action to take in an emergency. Drills for fire and other emergencies shall be conducted each school year in accordance with the requirements of New Mexico Statute. Each school will conduct at least one drill per month, nine fire drills, two preventative/emergency lockdown drills and one evacuation drill (one of the drill types listed will occur once each week for the first four weeks of the school year).

Farmington Preschool Academies Classroom Placement:

All students are placed in classrooms with peers from their elementary school district. When they progress to kindergarten, they will have relationships established and have familiar faces during the transition from preschool.

Farmington Preschool Academy East

There are three ways students enter FPA East for special education intervention. All students must be three years old to receive services.

Transfer students already have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and relocate to Farmington Municipal Schools.

Child Find screenings are mandated to be held throughout the year "to find" students. Farmington families with concerns about any of their child's development may bring the child in for vision, hearing, and speech screening. If further evaluations appear warranted, they are completed at a later appointment. If the child meets eligibility and the Eligibility Determination Team determines that there is an educational need for special education services, an IEP is completed and the student is placed in program.

Part C to Part B Transition takes place when a child has been receiving early intervention (25% delay) with a group such as Roundtree or Growing In Beauty (Part C). Following evaluations and qualification with at least a 30% delay in a specified area, FPA East (Part B) takes over the serving of those students on the child's third birthday. IEP goals are written for each student in the area(s) in which s/he qualifies. Progress reports are given every 4½ weeks and are used to guide and improve instruction.

Farmington Preschool Academy East PEER STUDENTS

The Peer Student program is designed for typically developing children who do not qualify for special education services, to enroll at FPA East. Many students already act as role models in play and readiness skills and we want to be sure that we have good role models also for language and articulation and behavior. Parents who wish to enroll their children for the peer student program have the same paperwork requirements as the other students. These FSPS maintains a 1:4 adult-to-student ratio. Peer students must be three years old.

FPA East TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

During the year an FPA East student turns five, a kindergarten progression meeting will be held. At this meeting, present levels of performance and progress reports from preschool will be reviewed. The elementary school your child will be attending will give information and write goals and accommodations that s/he will need to be successful in kindergarten.

FPA East TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from FPA East is offered by the school district as a related service in your child's IEP. Each bus is equipped with seat belts, bus driver, assistant, and radio contact with the bus yard. When a change in your child's pick up or take-home point is necessary, please **call FPA East** to

give us the new information. We will fax the information to the bus yard. **Normally THREE (3) DAYS ARE NEEDED TO MAKE CHANGES.** The Director of Transportation who coordinates a district-wide schedule arranges all bus schedules. Therefore, frequent changes or disruptions in schedules are discouraged, as they affect other children and drivers. Please get to know your child's bus driver(s), as they may be your best source for busing information. If your child is sick, not coming to school, or if you are bringing your child, please call the bus yard and give them as much advance notice as possible. If your child misses the bus three days in a row and you have not called, the bus will stop coming by your house. You must then call the bus yard to begin services again.

Preschool children **MAY NOT BE LEFT HOME UNATTENDED** or left with strangers or siblings under 18 years of age. Be sure to communicate any changes with the bus drivers. When no one is home to receive a child, the drivers may radio the bus yard to phone you and drive by your home twice (time permitting). If no one is home on the second attempt, children are normally returned to school but only as a last resort.

Riding a school bus is a privilege and carries some responsibilities on the part of the student. Students are required to cooperate and follow bus safety rules. If the student fails to follow the rules, parent and teacher will receive a notice. If the problem is not resolved, suspension from bus privileges may be imposed. Parents who transport need to bring their student to the classroom door and check in with an adult in the classroom. Please check in at the office to sign your child out prior to picking them up.

FPA East ATTENDANCE

If your student has not attended for 10 days, s/he will be dropped from the program unless you call and let the staff know that s/he will be returning. Please make sure your student is on time for class as s/he may miss needed service time if s/he is consistently late.

NM PREK PRESCHOOLS - FPA South and FPA West

Application/Enrollment

Parents must complete an online application. Items to be included: the child's birth certificate, vaccination record and current proof of residence, (utility bill or rental agreement). Incomplete packets will not be accepted for enrollment, nor be placed on a waiting list. An updated proof of residence or vaccination record is required at the time the student is enrolled. Teachers will contact parents at the beginning of the school year to arrange a time for a home visit so the students can meet the teachers in the home environment.

If you have completed an online application and have not heard from us, please call 505-599-8744. If all NM PreK slots are full, your child's name

will be placed on a waiting list. Our office will call you as soon as an opening is available. For this reason, please keep us informed of a change in phone/contact numbers.

As required by NM PED, parents will be asked to help complete the "Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 and ASQ Social Emotional Questionnaire." These are called screening tools because they give the teachers baseline information on the individual child. (They are **not** used to 'screen' students in to nor out of the program.) Information in these documents, as well as any information that you provide, is confidential and used to show growth in these areas.

FPA South and West Attendance

If your student is ill, please call the school so the teacher can be notified and the absence can be parent-verified. Please value this opportunity and have your child at school as much as possible! Consistent attendance gives your child the message that school is important and that they are important. Have your student at school on time so that he/she does not miss valuable instruction time. While it may appear that students are just playing, teachers carefully plan activities to maximize learning and socialization.

We understand when there are family events or emergencies that prevent your child coming to school. A phone call is considered parent verification of an absence.

If you have not called us after your child has been absent for three days, you may get a phone call from the teacher. At seven days, you will receive a call or letter from the office. We are happy to meet with you at school or make a home visit. The NM PED monitors our student attendance. If students miss ten consecutive days that are not parent verified, we are required to disenroll them.

NM PREK Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance Plan / Availability of Program and How Families are Notified

NM PreK serves Farmington students during their year immediately preceding kindergarten. There are two school sites, **FPA South and West**. These programs are funded by NM Public Education Department. Flyers and brochures are sent to all ten elementary schools in the Farmington School District, as well as enrollment packets. Flyers are also placed on bulletin boards at Community Centers, Farmington Museum and WIC office. Many families find out about the pre-k program by word-of-mouth.

FPA South and West RECRUITMENT

Parents are encouraged to enroll any child who resides in Farmington Municipal School District and meets the age requirement; students must be four years old on August 31st. Each spring, we have a "PreK Roundup," day in

which families are encouraged to visit the facilities and fill out an enrollment packet. Registration packets are available at any time at the PreK sites and the elementary schools.

FPA South and West PRIORITIES FOR ENROLLMENT

As some Title I funds are used as supplemental funding, we are required to have at least 66% of our students from the elementary school areas that qualify for Title I funding: Animas, Apache, Bluffview, Esperanza, McCormick, McKinley, Mesa Verde, Northeast. We also accept students from the Country Club and Ladera attendance areas. In order to maximize transportation funding, we offer a bus for either the morning or afternoon session for each attendance area. Students may be accepted to attend the opposite session depending on openings; parents must, however, be responsible for transporting their student. We are excited to be in the pilot program for *NMFOCUS: Essential Elements for Quality*. This includes an inclusion program, partnering with Farmington Special Preschool so that each class will have three or four students that receive special education services. This also requires limiting our class sizes to eighteen students. If classes are full, students will be put on a waiting list and enrolled when openings become available.

Title I, Part A PED website:

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.

Title I, Part A of ESEA was originally undertaken by President Lyndon B. Johnson as a part of his "war on poverty". It was then and is now the largest compensatory education program in America. The intent of Title I is to narrow the education gap that exists between middle and low-income children by providing extra resources to help improve instruction in high-poverty schools.

FPA South and West TRANSPORTATION

Parents of students attending **FPA South and West** preschools are encouraged to provide transportation when possible. A bus is available, however, to transport children. Either a morning or an afternoon session is available for each area of Farmington. If your child requires a bus, then you are not able to choose which session your child attends, AM or PM.

An adult must always accompany pre-k students on and off the bus.

Students are delivered **OR** picked up from home **only in the middle of the day**, when there are not elementary students present. This varies between AM and PM sessions, as detailed below.

Please Note: Parents, if you have other children in your family, who walk or ride the bus, **OR** as a kindergarten student, your child would walk or ride the

bus, this is what would determine your child to be either a walker or a bus rider, as described below.

*If the student would normally be required to **walk** to their Home Elementary School OR parents take them there:*

AM Session:

Picked Up: Home Elementary Home School

Take Home: Home

PM Session:

Picked Up: Home

Take Home: Home Elementary Home School

*If they would normally **ride the regular bus** to and from their Home Elementary School:*

AM Session:

PU: Neighborhood Bus Stop with the Elementary kids and transported to **FPA South or West**.

TH: Home

PM Session:

PU: Home

TH: **FPA West:** FMS Bus Picks them up at FPA West and then may pick up other elementary kids.

FPA South: The Home Elementary School is Esperanza for all PM FPA South PreK students. The FPA South students ride the regular TH Elementary Esperanza Busses, like the rest of the Esperanza Elementary Students and will be dropped at regular bus stops, unless they have SPED door-to-door transportation.

Note: If preschool students from any preschool site must transfer to another bus, the preschool driver makes sure they get on their correct bus. Transfers occur at an elementary school, where preschool students arrive prior to the elementary school students being released at the end of the day.

PRESCHOOL WAIVERS

Farmington Municipal Schools is committed to provide quality education services for students residing in our school attendance zone. Parents who do not live in the Farmington Schools attendance areas may request a waiver for their child following district procedures. Approval is dependent on current preschool class enrollment. Transportation is not provided for students on a waiver. Waivers must be resubmitted and reviewed each year and are subject to revocation. Waivers may be revoked if the student does not abide by

school expectations or if class sizes exceed recommended teacher-student ratio.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information pertaining to children enrolled in preschool programs is regarded as confidential and is kept securely stored at all times. No information regarding an individual child is released to anyone unless written authorization is obtained from the parent or legal guardian with the exception of information between schools in the district. Visitors are told that all information is confidential and not to be discussed outside the preschool. Confidentiality is governed at the preschools by the legal guidelines of FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act), PPRA (Protecting the Pupil's Rights Amendment), HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability Privacy Act) and NCLB (No Child Left Behind).

FAMILY PARTICIPATION

One of the most important components of the preschool is family participation. Parent Teacher conferences are offered three times a year and progress notes are sent home every 4½ weeks in accordance with the district calendar. We also offer activities and workshops during the school year. Children thrive and learn best when there is a strong link between home and school.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

There are many support groups already in existence throughout our community for parents whose child has a specific disability or diagnosis. We will attempt to provide information regarding meeting dates and times.

SURVEYS

The NM Public Education Department requires surveys twice a year. We review that data to improve our services to students and their families.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) / School Council

The preschools welcome input from the parents of our students and community members. In order for parents to be well informed about preschool operations and to provide input, a parent advisory committee (PAC) will meet at least three times during the school year. The dates of these meetings will be announced at the beginning of the school year. PACs are active at both the school and Exceptional Programs Office. Parents are also recruited to serve on related committees, such as Children Onward, which represents all early childhood agencies and schools within San Juan County.

ADVISORY SCHOOL COUNCILS

A. Each public school shall create an advisory "school council" to assist the school principal with school-based decision-making and to involve parents in their children's education.

B. A school council shall be created and its membership elected in accordance with local school board rule. School council membership shall reflect an equitable balance between school employees and parents and community members. At least one community member shall represent the business community, if such person is available. The school principal may serve as chairman. The school principal shall be an active member of the school council.

C. The school council shall:

(1) work with the school principal and give advice, consistent with state and school district rules and policies, on policies relating to instructional issues and curricula and on the public school's proposed and actual budgets;

(2) develop creative ways to involve parents in the schools

(3) where appropriate, coordinate with any existing work force development boards or vocational education advisory councils to connect students and school academic programs to business resources and opportunities; and

(4) serve as the champion for students in building community support for schools and encouraging greater community participation in the public schools.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Parents and families have the opportunity to volunteer at all three preschools to assist in duties of an educational nature on a regular basis throughout the school year. Volunteers will be trained on crucial topics and will complete paperwork and background check, including finger printing (around \$40). All volunteers will be given a copy of the

NEWSLETTERS

Each month your child will bring home a preschool newsletter to let you know about upcoming events, themes in teaching, and other preschool news. If you have any items or announcements that you would like to share, please give us a call. We will also try to include helpful hints or activities you can do with your child at home. A classroom newsletter may also be sent home periodically to help you stay involved and knowledgeable about your child's education.

SPECIAL NOTES

Frequently special notes requiring your attention are sent home with your child. These are typically on colored paper. PLEASE check your student's

backpack for these notes. We want to ensure you receive all vital information. We will also use School Messenger.

NOTEBOOKS/FOLDERS

Each child at the preschool is supplied with a notebook and/or folder to help facilitate communication between home and school. We encourage you to write in the notebook frequently to tell us the important information and exciting things your child is doing at home. We will check notebooks daily, but we may not be able to write in each child's notebook every day, as it takes away from instructional time. We will write at least once a week and initial by the date to let you know we did look at the notebook. Families, please do not rely on the notebook or folder communication when the information is vital and needs immediate attention. In this case, we call immediately.

MEDICAID IN THE SCHOOLS

Farmington Municipal Schools bill Medicaid for reimbursement of services with the school program such as: speech, occupational and physical therapy that a student receives while in the school setting. The money gained helps pay for nursing and other services. A copy of the student's Medicaid card will be necessary in order for billing to take place.

INDIAN EDUCATION

In order for Native American children to receive services from the Office of Indian Education, they must provide a Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB). All new and returning students will be required to present a CIB before services are provided. The CIB must be issued for the student, not the parent. Enrollment forms will be sent to each student. Please fill them out and return them as soon as possible so your student can receive Indian Education Services.

LEGAL ISSUES

In a time when family arrangements vary greatly, it is our policy to work cooperatively with both parents. We request that you supply us with adequate information regarding who may, or may not, pick-up your student from preschool. Such information, at a minimum, shall include any restraining orders and legal documents specifying the custodial arrangement and scheduled periods of guardian responsibility and visitation.

NOTICE - NM CHILDREN'S CODE 32-4-3

New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department (CYFD) requires reporting all cases regarding suspected abuse/neglect to children. Preschool staff will

report any situation of suspected abuse/neglect which is observed by them, or which is reported to them by you, your child, or a member of your family.

CLOTHING NEEDS

Each student needs to have an extra set of clothing at the preschool in case of emergency (art activities, meals, or toileting accident). Please be sure to clearly label all clothing with the student's name. The weather can change dramatically during the school day, so be sure to send a coat or sweatshirt just in case. In Winter, we will go outside only if the weather cooperates with us and the temperature is above 20°F. We encourage the students to wear hats and mittens with their coats. Again, be sure to **label all clothing**, coats, gloves or mittens, and back packs.

DIAPERS

All students who wear diapers or "pull-ups" need to bring a supply with them to school. Please make sure they are labeled. When your child's supply begins to run low, we will send you a note. Be sure to communicate your needs with your child's teacher/assistants for those students who are working on potty training. We will assist your child.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

The staff at the preschools believe that students can learn appropriate behavior, which enhances their overall growth and development and at the same time promotes a strong sense of self worth.

Classrooms have a daily routine, which provides the kind of structure and boundaries that enhance the growth of positive behavior patterns. Boundaries are set and enforced so the students know what they may and may not do. Rules are few but important for young children. All students attending the preschools will follow the Farmington Municipal Schools District school-wide discipline plan. In addition, we have adopted the same basic classroom rules throughout the building, which include the following:

Be Safe

Be a Listener

Be a Helper

Be Healthy

Students are given lots of positive reinforcement; praise, hugs, pats on the back, a big smile, when they are behaving appropriately. This kind of positive interaction between staff and students effectively promotes acceptable behavior from the students.

On occasions when students test boundaries set by the classroom teachers, some of the following methods might be used.

1. Redirection - the teacher will show or tell the student the appropriate way to behave.
2. Praise - the staff praise students acting appropriately.
3. Removal from activity - staff would explain why the student was not allowed to continue the activity. The teacher would remove student to an area where they can calm down. The teacher or other adult will stay with the student until they are ready to return to the activity.
4. Thinking Time - the student might be removed from an activity and asked to sit in a 'thinking chair' for one minute for each year of age to think about their behavior with an adult present. Teacher may have a conference with parents if it is necessary. If appropriate, an intervention for a functional behavior review and behavior plan may be completed with the parent.
5. All staff is required to be trained annually to safely restrain an individual as a last resort following guidelines from the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). The primary focus of this program is to first defuse and de-escalate the inappropriate behavior and teach the appropriate desired behavior.

ART ACTIVITIES

At the preschools, our art projects are often linked to monthly themes. We use these activities to practice many of the skills we will be learning in preschool. Examples of these skills are cutting, coloring, gluing, painting, and sorting. We will try throughout the year to label which work was done with help (HOH - hand over hand), or if it has been done on their own. Some of the projects require lots of help and when this is necessary, we will be using verbal as well as non-verbal language to help your student gain information and knowledge.

SHOW AND TELL

Most teachers encourage students to bring things from home for show and Tell. We would appreciate it if your student would bring only **one item** at a time. Our special time for show and tell varies with teachers. Check with your student's teacher for the show and tell day. District policy says **no play weapons or pets** are allowed, so please keep this in mind when choosing what your student is bringing. Show and tell items are put in cubbies and left there so that they are sure to go home with the right student. Please label show and tell item to guarantee it is returned home with your student.

INDEPENDENT DRESSING SKILLS

As children develop and begin to prepare for school, it is very important that we allow them all the opportunities they need to learn and become

independent. Children need to become independent of their dressing needs themselves when they attend kindergarten. This includes: zipping, snapping and putting on gloves, hats, shoes, etc. When your child is dressing, plan plenty of time and allow them to do it as much as possible independently (Some frustration is appropriate, but not too much). If you have any questions or if this is a problem area for your child, please let us know.

MEALS: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Farmington Municipal Schools and schools across America are meeting new national standards for school lunches this school year. School lunches now include more fruits, vegetables, and whole grain-rich foods; only fat-free or low-fat milk; "right-size" meals with portions designed for a child's age; and less saturated fat, trans fat and sodium. Farmington Preschool Academies serve the same meals as the rest of the schools in the district. Families need to fill out an application with your household income information for your child(ren) to qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Applications are available at each school site or can be accessed at the fms.k12.nm.us website under Key Links, then Meal/Lunch Application. **Until you submit your child's meal application and it has been approved, you will need to provide meal payment with your child.** This process frequently requires a two-week turn around. The cost of breakfast is \$1.50 for AM students and the cost of lunch is \$2.25 for PM students. If you have any questions regarding this process or your pending status, you may contact **Student Nutrition at 599-8778**. You can make an account and deposit money into it for your child's breakfast/lunch. You will need their school ID# to this. Please continue to pay for your child's breakfast or lunch until you have received the confirmation letter from the school district. Once you receive the letter, it will state if you will pay full price, or qualify for a free or reduced meal. Please note you will not be reimbursed for meals already served. All information on the application is completely confidential and only used to determine the qualifying rate. If your student has a specific nutritional or diet need or restriction, PLEASE let us know immediately. We will be happy to make necessary accommodations. If your student requires supplements beyond meals, please talk to your student's teacher. Depending on the dietary concern, a doctor's statement and/or related school documentation may be requested.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Farmington preschools respect and celebrate the diversity of our families. For families who have children who speak languages other than English, FSPS will make every effort to place their children with a teacher who is bilingual or has a Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

endorsement. Translators and interpreters will be provided for IEP and other meetings, as well as for paperwork.

FOCUS

New Mexico has chosen, as its overarching vision, the goal established by its Early Learning Advisory Council: *“Every child in New Mexico will have an equal opportunity for success in school based upon equitable access to an aligned and high-quality learning system.”* The NM Public Education Department is committed to participate in implementation of *FOCUS: New Mexico’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS)*, which is a system includes program criteria by which preschool programs will be measured and a process for program improvement. FOCUS will provide the criteria, tools, and resources necessary to support and improve the quality of preschools across the state.

EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES / ESSENTIAL INDICATORS / PORTFOLIOS

New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines (ELGs) provide a framework of criteria regarding children’s growth, development, and learning. The Essential Indicators are observable behaviors or skills of children in relation to a specific outcome. The ELGs and the Essential Indicators direct the information needed in each student’s portfolio. Preschool staff collects and gathers data to place in the portfolios. They use the information to inform families of their student’s progress and to guide and improve instruction with developmentally appropriate practices.



PRESCHOOL LITERACY PROGRAM

Research has proven that the preschool years are vital to learning to read. Children that are exposed to books, stories, poems and rhymes are better readers in the future. The preschool is a print rich environment and the furniture and items in our buildings are labeled in English, Spanish and/or American Sign Language. To assist your child we continually add new activities to our curriculum. We also talk to parents and send home information regarding how you as parents can get your children ready to read.

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

The preschools follow established and approved curriculums for preschool children. We include specific curriculum to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities. The curriculum is based on the preschool 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 <https://prek.ped.state.nm.us>.

Zoo-phonics is a kinesthetic method for teaching students the letters and their sounds through animals using each letter's character, signal, and sound. This includes naming the letter, the sound the letter makes, and the Zoo-phonics animal and signal associated with the letter.

Handwriting Without Tears (HWT) is a multisensory program that enables students to develop their readiness and school skills. The program includes using wood pieces, magic boards, chalkboards, modeling clay, workbooks, and music. (may be used in centers)

Flexibility, Endurance, and Strength (FES) is the physical education program the preschools use on a regular basis with the students to increase their muscle strength, physical mobility, balance and control. FES is promoted by our physical and occupational therapists. **Flexibility** consists of a series of mild stretches performed to increase children's range of motion and reduce their risks of injury to otherwise tight muscles and joints.

Endurance training is designed to increase oxygen flow within the body: thereby generating energy for both the body and mind. This increases children's ability to attend to various tasks for greater periods of time before tiring. Endurance training is any activity that increases the heart rate such as: running, jogging in place, dancing, jumping jacks, etc. **Strength** involves using resistance to build muscle strength. This increases blood flow, encourages muscle development, builds strength and stimulates the mind.

Typically, small water bottles filled with either colored water or sand are used for this series of exercises. The size and weight of the bottles are individually designed to fit the size, weight and abilities of each student.

Early Learning Second Step includes social-emotional skills. Instruction includes: Skills for Learning, Empathy, Emotion Management, Friendship Skills, and Problem Solving. The program has been carefully designed to guide children to learn, practice, and apply skills for self-regulation and social-emotional competence.

PAX

Imagine if you found a simple, inexpensive tool that can positively change the lives of all the students in a classroom, school or community.

Farmington Preschool Academies use such a tool, called PAX Good Behavior Game in our classrooms. How does this tool help your child? It is a proven strategy with more than thirty years of scientific study that shows how PAX Game leads to reduced classroom disruptions, fewer symptoms of inattention and impulsivity, reduced aggression, fewer referrals and suspensions and more teaching time.

The Game is played three times a day during regular classroom instruction. The students in the class help define the rules that are set up to create a more "wonderful school". They play in teams chosen by the teacher. Teams get a "spleem" for disruptive behavior, if they have three or less their team still wins. The winning teams then get a "Granny Wacky" prize which is a 10-30-second fun exercise in the classroom, such as tip toe tag, air guitar, make animal noises, etc.

During this game, the students are exercising the portion of their brain that controls impulsivity. They also learn to support one another rather than make fun of each other. All of this helps to reduce inattention and disruptions, which in turn, enhances learning.

Ask your child about the game in their classroom. To learn more go to

[http://district.fms.k12.nm.us/Departments/PAXGBG/S065E03D8?
Close=-1&WasUnRead=1](http://district.fms.k12.nm.us/Departments/PAXGBG/S065E03D8?Close=-1&WasUnRead=1)

If you are interested in seeing any of the curriculums, please contact your student's teacher.

Farmington Preschool Academy Homework And Assignment Policy

Homework Guidelines:

Farmington preschools recognize that the research for homework at the preschool level is not supportive.¹ The schools, however, are supportive of an effort to prepare students for transition to kindergarten. Therefore, the primary focus and purpose of 'homework' at this level is family interaction. This is in contrast to the more independent nature of the homework following the transition to elementary school.

Homework, for students with special needs, ages 3-5, is an essential way to communicate the student's academic, social, and Individual Education Program (IEP) goals with their families and caregivers. Activities allow the child to practice what has already been mastered at school and provides an opportunity to apply these skills in order to *generalize* them at home. Doing so not only deepens the student's mastery, but also increases retention.

Homework Guiding Principles:

1. Homework is not mandatory and should be completed without pressuring the child.
2. Students should be able to complete the tasks independently once instructions are known, while at the same foster positive interactions with parents and care givers.
3. The activities must be:
 - a. Enjoyable & motivating: Involve play,
 - b. Meaningful: Developmentally appropriate,
 - c. Differentiate: Related to the child's IEP, and
 - d. Related to real life: Match Socks, Set the Table...etc.
4. Homework should have an end product, or observation, to document effectiveness.
5. Preschools will provide weekly homework opportunities, and special, monthly family/caregiver project kits, including all required resources.
6. Homework should include a daily 5 minutes "Read-To Time" and a 5-10 minutes weekly parent/child Activity.

In-School Assignment Policy

In-School Assignments have three purposes: practice, preview, and evidence. Those assignments designated as evidence will be evaluated for developmentally appropriate proficiency and recorded. The proficiency score received indicates how well the student has mastered the content.

¹ Dewar, Gwen, Ph.D. Homework for Young Children: Is it Justified, 2011-13
Rothbart & Rueda, 2005

² KY Dept. of Ed – Preschool Program Guidance for Developmentally Appropriate Practice of Workbook, Test Sheets & Dittos, Nov. 2011

Teacher involvement Includes:

- Fostering time-on-task and independence,
- Checking and reviewing assignments, and
- Providing timely and specific feedback.

Parent/Caregivers' Involvement include:

- Providing continued interest and concern for the child's successful performance in school through encouraging and supporting the child in his/her performance on classroom assignments,
- Inquiring about learning goals, focus, and level of proficiency, and
- Supporting the school in regard to the students' being given meaningful assignments.

This policy Must Be:

- Approved by the District Instructional Team,
- Reviewed annually,
- Introduced at the beginning of each school year, and
- Posted in classrooms, school website, and Parent/Teacher Handbook.

DAILY ROUTINES

Breakfast & Lunch:

Breakfast is served for AM students and lunch is served for PM students. This is a great time for students to socially interact with peers and teachers. It is also a great time to work on requesting, taking turns, sharing, and manners. The preschools participate in family style dining when possible and are encouraged to serve their own food and clear their dishes. Afterwards they clear and wash their place at the table.

Bathroom Time

This is also an opportunity to work on increasing the student's independence. Adults always accompany the students into the bathroom area. We explain to the students that we are washing away germs and teach them the proper way to wash. This is also a great time to work on rote counting.

Circle Time

This is a very important time of the student's day. This is the time where they learn new language concepts and preschool routines. It is important for students to participate regardless of their individual needs. Teachers modify length of time to match developmental levels of the students. We use sign language, hand-over-hand, and/or modeling to show proper behavior.

Centers

Centers are an important part of our day, with the students spending one hour of each day in free choice. Eight centers are provided in each big room. Centers include developmentally appropriate materials and activities in Math, Science/Sensory, Writing, Library, Art, Blocks, Puzzles/Table Toys, and Dramatic Play.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The federal, No Child Left Behind, and the state, Public School Code permits you as a parent, the right to request information about the licensure and other qualifications, teaching assignment, and training of your child's teacher, instructional support providers, including paraprofessionals, and school principal(s) who may work with your child.

Parents will be notified when a student's teacher is out for more than four weeks and licensed teachers are required to be used as substitutes for classroom teachers who are out for more than four weeks.

If you are interested in requesting this information, please contact one of the preschool secretaries.