



# NM Pre-K

**Family Handbook**  
**Alamogordo Public Schools**  
**Stepping Stones Preschool**  
**Holloman Elementary School**

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## LETTER TO FAMILIES

*Dear Families,*

*On behalf of the staff at Stepping Stones Preschool and the preschool at Holloman Elementary School, I would like to welcome you to the preschool programs we offer through the Alamogordo Public Schools. One of the first things you will notice about our program is our wonderful team. I feel so privileged to work with such a group of individuals who care so passionately about the children of Alamogordo and Holloman Air Force Base. We strive to provide a strong and safe learning environment for your students. We also look forward to sharing a productive partnership with you, the parents. Our goal is to see your children achieve their greatest potential. We know a strong partnership with parents is the key to making the greatest difference in your child's education. We are thrilled to have your child in our program. We are committed to establishing a safe environment that supports the social-emotional, cognitive, language and physical development of our students. We also support the culture and languages of the multi-lingual learners who are in our programs.*

*Our program has been developed to allow us to collaborate with our families and communities. Family engagement is paramount for supporting student learning and family well-being. We want to partner with you in supporting the learning and growth of your child. Families will be invited to participate in educational activities and events throughout the school year. We are a collaborative district, willing to do what is needed to support the well-being of all students. We are so happy that you have chosen to be a member of the APS family. Please use the handbook as a guide for how our preschools are facilitated within Alamogordo Public Schools.*

*Sincerely,*

*Alamogordo Public Schools*

*Dawna Dupre, MEd, MA*

*Preschool Administrator*

[Dawna.dupre@alamogordoschools.org](mailto:Dawna.dupre@alamogordoschools.org)

## **SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **Stepping Stones Preschool:**

1200 N Florida Ave, Buildings E&F  
Alamogordo, NM 88310  
575-812-5525

Preschool Administrator - Dawna Dupre  
Office Phone - 575-812-5487  
Work Cell - 575-921-6362  
Email - [dawna.dupre@alamogordoschools.org](mailto:dawna.dupre@alamogordoschools.org)

Secretary - Marla Garcia  
Office Phone - 575-812-5525  
Email - [marla.garcia@alamogordoschools.org](mailto:marla.garcia@alamogordoschools.org)

### **Holloman Elementary School:**

750 Arnold Ave  
Holloman Air Force Base, NM  
575-812-6100

Principal - Lisa Fisher  
Office: 575-812-6105  
Cell: 575-415-5705  
Email - [lisa.fisher@alamogordoschools.org](mailto:lisa.fisher@alamogordoschools.org)

Assistant Principal - Kathy Roush  
Office: 575-812-6111  
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Preschool Administrator - Dawna Dupre  
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Secretary - Marla Garcia  
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## **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. We also use curriculum that is approved by the New Mexico Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD). One of the reasons this curriculum was selected is because it also supports dual language learners. 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.

## **GUIDANCE POLICY**

Every child in New Mexico has diverse strengths rooted in his or her family's unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances. Early learning programs that support the full participation of every child build on these strengths. They do so by promoting a sense of belonging, by supporting positive social relationships, and by enabling families and professionals to gain advocacy skills that positively impact the life of every child.

## **NEW MEXICO PREK PROGRAM STANDARDS**

Alamogordo NM Preschool follows the New Mexico PreK Program Standards for our preschool programs as outlined by the Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD). We accomplish this by:

- Support of linguistically and culturally appropriate curriculum within a framework of developmentally appropriate practices.
- Posting weekly lesson plans.
- Assessing each child utilizing the NM PreK Observational Assessment, Early Childhood Observational Tool (ECOT). The ECOT will be administered three times a year to monitor student progress. Teachers will adjust instruction based on the individual needs of students according to Early Learning Guidelines (ELG).
- Implementing NM Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) individualized for children's needs in the areas of
  - Physical Development, Health and Well Being
  - Literacy
  - Mathematics
  - Aesthetic Creativity
  - Scientific Conceptual Understandings
  - Self, Family and Community
  - Approaches to Learning
- Providing early literacy practices and language-rich instruction through daily and intentional activities that align with Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling for Early Childhood (LETRS) research based best practices.
  - Quality literature read aloud with explicit comprehension strategy instruction; both as a whole class and with individual or small groups of children
  - Developing phonological awareness, spoken language, oral language and vocabulary, knowledge of the alphabet
  - Understanding concepts about print
  - Implementation of daily small group literacy activities
  - Opportunity for developmentally appropriate writing activities
- Targeting social emotional development through implementation of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children.

- Partnering with families through engagement, education and effective communication.
- Ongoing professional development, training, collaboration, and participation in NM Practice Based Coaching (PBC) to improve evidence-based teaching.

## **CURRICULUM**

**Three Cheers for Pre-K** is a purposeful, play-based curriculum where learning is initiated through skills-based experiences and structured around quality children's literature.

- Equal and equitable Spanish with Uno, dos, tres Prekinder!
- Nine Ready-to-go Theme Kits contain everything needed to deliver developmentally appropriate learning experiences across all skill domains around a big idea.
- High focus on early literacy, family engagement, and establishing a habit of reading in the home.
- Creative options for theme-specific centers that are routine-oriented plus simple ideas to refresh center activities throughout each theme.
- Hundreds of interactive gaming opportunities develop letter recognition, letter-sound knowledge, phonological awareness, vocabulary knowledge, and math number recognition.

## **HOME LANGUAGE & CULTURE**

In the APS NM PreK program, we strive to honor the home languages and cultures of our students. We follow multi-lingual practices in our program. Professional development is also provided to educators in this area. Our staff, including administration, teachers, and educational assistants, complete professional development in order to better support multi-lingual learners.

One of the ways we support home languages is by collaborating with families. We intentionally support home language and English language development throughout

the school day. For example, staff may ask families to teach them basic words and phrases in the home language that can be used at school. We invite children and families to help us choose materials, books, music, and other artifacts for the environment that represent children's home languages and cultures. We can send pictures of key vocabulary home as well. Family members can teach the children how to say words in their home languages. Children can then return to the program and teach others. Words from multilingual children's home languages can be used during rhymes or songs in the classroom setting.

## **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. 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.

## **HOME VISITS**

Each preschool teacher schedules visits to each individual child's home prior to the first day of school. Following COVID-safe protocols, these visits may be conducted virtually. 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. NM preschool requires one home visit.

## **PARENT/ TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are outlined on the District Calendar. Classes are not held on these days, but you may bring your child with you to the conference if needed. Teachers will ensure to select a time that fits your schedule. NM PreK requires two parent/teacher conferences.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The purpose of the APS 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

The Alamogordo Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, marital status, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The Alamogordo Public School District does not discriminate in its hiring or other employment practices. The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Deputy Superintendent of Operations  
1211 Hawaii Avenue  
P.O. Box 650  
(575) 812-6000

The Alamogordo Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, marital status, pregnancy, age, sexual orientation or disability in admission to its programs, services, or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals, or in any aspect of their operations. The Alamogordo Public School District Career and Technical Education department does not discriminate in enrollment or access to any of the programs available which include Agriculture/Industry, Art, Business Management, Communications,

Engineering/Computers, Family and Consumer Science, and Health Science Technology. The lack of English language skills shall not be a barrier to admission or participation in the district's activities and programs.

This notice is provided as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding these laws may be forwarded to the designated compliance coordinator(s).

Title IX Coordinator  
1211 Hawaii Avenue  
P.O. Box 650  
(575) 812-6000

## **APS EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM & ELIGIBILITY**

There are two facets to the Early Childhood program that is provided by the Alamogordo Public Schools.

### **1. NM PreK is a program for 4-year-old children:**

This program provides preschool comprehensive services for any 4-year-old child, as long as there are openings available.

Children who qualify for the program must be four years of age by September 1st of the current calendar year. All four-year-olds can register for PreK and will be selected based on need.

Priority will be given to families

- Residing within the boundaries of a Title I school district
- Experiencing homelessness/displacement
- Children who are in foster care

## **2. Developmentally Delayed Preschool is a program for 3-year-old and 4-year-old students:**

This program provides services for 3-year-old and 4-year-old students who have special needs. To participate in this part of the program, students must be eligible to receive IEP services, which may include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, etc. Students may also qualify due to behavioral, cognitive, or other types of concerns.

Children who qualify for the program must have a valid IEP, which recommends services in an educational setting.

## **RECRUITMENT**

### **NM PreK:**

PK Roundup - Every spring the Alamogordo Public Schools holds a PK Roundup to fill preschool slots for the next school year. This usually takes place towards the end of April. PK Roundup is advertised on the district website and other social media platforms. Flyers about the event are also distributed. Once slots are filled, the district maintains a wait list. If slots become available, families are contacted in order of the child's position on the wait list. As described in the preceding Eligibility guidelines, priority is given to some students according to Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD) requirements.

### **Developmentally Delayed Preschool Program:**

Child Find - All APS early childhood programs work in collaboration year-round with the district's Child Find Program. Two publicized Child Find events are held each year. The Alamogordo Public Schools also maintains an ongoing Child Find process. Parents are welcome to contact the district at any time if they feel their child may need individualized support provided through the evaluation and IEP process.

C-to-B transition - The Alamogordo Public Schools also works together with our Part C provider, Zia Therapy, in the transition of children from Part C (provided by

Zia Therapy) to Part B (provided by the Alamogordo Public Schools) when children turn 3 years of age.

## **ENROLLMENT & REGISTRATION**

The following documents must 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)

School Registration - registration is online through PowerSchool. Visit our website for information [www.alamogordoschools.org](http://www.alamogordoschools.org)

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 secretary will dis-enroll the child from the program.

## **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. 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 the school secretary.

If no family member or emergency contacts have been reached after 30 minutes from dismissal time, teacher will notify the school administration. At this point,

the Department of Public Safety may be notified as well. Teachers must document the incident and the information is provided to the proper administrator.

APS NM PreK follows the Alamogordo Public School District's attendance policies. We will work diligently to assist all families.

## **EXPULSION**

Research suggests that school expulsion and suspension practices are associated with negative educational and life outcomes. If an alternative placement is being considered due to behavior, programs must ensure that required ECECD support interventions have been implemented.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS**

Developmental screenings will be completed within the first three months of attendance. The developmental screeners utilized by the Alamogordo Public Schools are the Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ). The results from the ASQ will be shared with families individually at parent-teacher conferences and/or home visits. Teachers will collaborate with families in providing children with strategies and/or activities to support their academic learning. At a later date, the teachers will meet with parents to discuss progress and follow-up concerns. If concerns continue, a referral may be made, with parental permission, for a special education evaluation.

## **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS**

All early childhood programs support children to participate in a safe and nurturing environment. 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.

## **HEALTH SCREENINGS**

The following health screenings are offered by the program:

- Vision Screening
- Hearing Screening

The school nurse will also document that children have received the following care: Annual Well Child Check and Dental Screening. The school nurse will also monitor that the Current Immunization Record is up-to-date.

### **Dispensation of Over-the-Counter Medications**

Medication will be dispensed only according to Policy and Regulation and a medication administration plan. All prescribed medications for children must have a label on it with the exception of a child's EpiPen. All early childhood programs adhere to the APS Health Services policies and procedures.

## **SAFETY**

All elementary schools have administrators on site to oversee safety of staff and children. Classrooms 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 situation. 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 will provide emergency information via APS website ([www.alamogordoschools.org](http://www.alamogordoschools.org)) and social media with instructions of procedures to keep parents informed. APS Central Office staff provide media outlets with closures or late starts due to severe weather conditions; this information is also located on the APS website.

## **TRANSITION SERVICES AND EDUCATION**

### **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, teachers will conduct a home visit with each family to discuss curriculum and procedures. The parents and students have the opportunity to become familiar with the teacher and ask any questions to ensure the children receive quality services from all program staff.

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

Going to kindergarten is an important life event. Preschoolers can feel excited—and a bit worried, too. Families may have similar feelings. Preschool teachers want the children in their classrooms to be ready for kindergarten. Teachers will discuss the transition to kindergarten with parents at the second Parent/ Teacher

Conference of the year. In addition, a Family Engagement event may be scheduled to discuss transition activities as well.

Children who have an Individual Education plan and are transitioning into a district elementary 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 by the IEP Team collectively to assist children in being successful in kindergarten.

### **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 in a Ziploc bag, and they are kept in the child's cubby. A toileting plan is completed for any child needing toileting assistance.

### **NUTRITION & FOOD SERVICE**

Early childhood programs provide meals from APS Department of Nutrition Services that meet USDA guidelines and are prepared on site. All children on a prescribed diet by a physician must bring written documentation to the nurse assigned to the school. Any student allergies, medical conditions, and physician requests for dietary instructions are also needed to ensure protocols are in place. If your child is tardy, please provide breakfast before bringing to school. A morning or afternoon snack is not provided by the district, but parents are welcome to send them with their children.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Consideration of transportation, as a related service, is offered to qualifying students enrolled in a Developmentally Delayed Preschool Program as part of the child's IEP.

## **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.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (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 (575)812-6001.

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. APS does not discriminate against anyone based on the APS Policy. Please refer to the APS District website for additional information.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

<p>Judy Rabon, President          1211 Hawaii Avenue, Alamogordo, NM 88310  <a href="mailto:judy.rabon@alamogordoschools.org">judy.rabon@alamogordoschools.org</a>          Phone #: 575.915.5443</p>	<p>Angela M. Cadwallader, School Board Member          1211 Hawaii Avenue, Alamogordo, NM 88310  <a href="mailto:angela.cadwallader@alamogordoschools.org">angela.cadwallader@alamogordoschools.org</a>          Phone #: 575.915.6211</p>
<p>Amanda Jewell, School Board Member          1211 Hawaii Avenue, Alamogordo, NM 88310  <a href="mailto:amanda.jewell@alamogordoschools.org">amanda.jewell@alamogordoschools.org</a>          Phone #: <a href="tel:575-915-6115">575-915-6115</a></p>	<p>Amber Ross, Vice-President          1211 Hawaii Avenue, Alamogordo, NM 88310  <a href="mailto:amber.ross@alamogordoschools.org">amber.ross@alamogordoschools.org</a></p>
<p>Carol Teweleit, Secretary          1211 Hawaii Avenue, Alamogordo, NM 88310  <a href="mailto:carol.teweleit@alamogordoschools.org">carol.teweleit@alamogordoschools.org</a>          Phone #: 575.915.6760</p>	<p>Col. Alfred Rosales, Holloman AFB Ex-Officio          1211 Hawaii Avenue, Alamogordo, NM 88310</p>
<p>Olivia Goodier          School Board Student Ex Officio</p>	

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION CONTACT INFORMATION

<p>Pamela Renteria - Acting Superintendent P.O. Box 650, Alamogordo, NM 88311 (575)812-6012 <a href="mailto:pamela.renteria@alamogordoschools.org">pamela.renteria@alamogordoschools.org</a></p>	<p>Colleen Tagle - Deputy Superintendent of Operations P.O. Box 650, Alamogordo, NM 88311 (575) 812-6065 <a href="mailto:colleen.tagle@alamogordoschools.org">colleen.tagle@alamogordoschools.org</a></p>
<p>Melissa Cole - Director of Special Programs P.O. Box 650, Alamogordo, NM 88311 (575) 812-5805 <a href="mailto:melissa.cole@alamogordoschools.org">melissa.cole@alamogordoschools.org</a></p>	<p>Lisa Patch - Director Health Services P.O. Box 650, Alamogordo, NM 88311 (575) 812-6095 <a href="mailto:lisa.patch@alamogordoschools.org">lisa.patch@alamogordoschools.org</a></p>
<p>Doyle Syling - Chief of Safety and Security P.O. Box 650, Alamogordo, NM 88311 (575) 812-6075 <a href="mailto:doyle.syling@alamogordoschools.org">doyle.syling@alamogordoschools.org</a></p>	<p>Justin Burks -Chief of Capital Outlay and Facilities P.O. Box 650, Alamogordo, NM 88311 (575)812-6015 <a href="mailto:justin.burks@alamogordoschools.org">justin.burks@alamogordoschools.org</a></p>

## ADDENDA

Covid-19 Disclaimer - Alamogordo Public Schools is committed to following the state and federal recommendations as we continue to deliver a high-quality education. We will maintain health and safety as our main priority for all students and staff. We will follow the latest guidance and will adjust our practice as changes are made at the state and federal level (CDC, NMPED, NMDOH). This includes, if required, taking temperatures of all who enter the buildings, wearing a face covering, social distancing, and hand washing/sanitizing. Therefore, we may be limiting our student and parent gatherings such as sporting events, assemblies, class parties, and volunteers in the schools.

Handbook Updates - The Student Handbook is updated annually; however, policy adoption and revisions may occur throughout the year. The district encourages parents to stay informed of proposed policy changes by reviewing newsletter and other communications explaining changes in policy or other rules that affect Student Handbook provisions. The district reserves the right to modify the Student Handbook at any time. Notice of revisions will be provided as is reasonably practical.