

Mesa Preschool Parent Handbook



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Our promise

Every student in Mesa Public Schools is known by name, served by strength and need, and graduates ready for college, career and community.

Our vision

Unprecedented Excellence in Education.

Our mission

To develop a highly educated and productive community, one student at a time.

Our core values

- Each student is important.
- Learning is our focus and priority.
- Collaboration and innovation are indispensable.
- Sound fiscal stewardship is essential.
- Diversity increases our opportunities.
- Success is expected and celebrated.

We Believe

Mesa provides inclusive preschool for children ages 3–5, supporting growth in cognitive, communication, motor, adaptive, and social-emotional skills. Our classrooms serve children with and without disabilities, promoting collaboration among families, caregivers, and staff.

We are committed to equity, inclusion, and the success of every child, regardless of background or ability. Children with disabilities are valued members of our community, and we believe in learning environments that foster belonging and meaningful relationships. At Mesa, preschool is a safe, supportive place where children learn, grow, and thrive.

Mesa Preschools follow the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) / National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) definition of early childhood inclusion:

“Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high-quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and support.



Dear Parents and Guardians:

On behalf of Mesa Public School District, I would like to welcome you to Mesa Public Schools Preschool.

We believe that family is the most important source of love, learning, and decision-making for each child. Our goal is to honor and respect the hopes and dreams you have for your child. We will listen, provide support, and assist you in encouraging your child's development.

Mesa Public Schools (MPS) is committed to providing high quality preschool instruction to your child and your family. We have been fortunate to attain highly skilled staff and will continue to strive to provide high-quality preschool instruction to children and their families. MPS will continue to review and refine our services by making data-based decisions and providing evidence-based practices. One of the tools used to make decisions is: Teaching Strategies Gold, Formative Assessment for Early Learning. Our preschools are aligned with the Arizona Department of Education Early Learning Standards, with a focus on early literacy, math, science, and social/emotional development.

We value your knowledge and encourage and invite you to actively participate in your child's education. We recognize that you are your child's best advocate and the most important member of their educational team. Mesa preschools will build upon the strengths and priorities of your family. We welcome your feedback about the preschool services your child receives.

Sincerely,

Megan Anderson
Director of Early Learning
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Partial Day Preschool Programs

The partial day programs include non-tuition sites and fee-based sites. We have preschools on a variety of elementary campuses throughout Mesa Public Schools.

All children enrolled as peers in the program are required to be potty trained.

Days:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

Times:

AM Session 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

PM Session 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Partial day preschool locations are currently at the following sites: (Changes in locations may change from year to year).

Adams, Brinton, Bush, Crismon, Edison, Eisenhower, Emerson, Entz, Falcon Hill, Field, Franklin at Brimhall, Franklin at Jordan, Guerrero, Hermosa Vista, Holmes, Hughes, Irving, Jefferson, Johnson, Keller, Lehi, Lincoln, Lindbergh, Longfellow, Lowell, Montessori programs at Sirrine and Bush, O'Connor, Patterson, Porter, Redbird, Red Mountain Ranch, Roosevelt, Salk, Stevenson, Summit, Taft, Washington, Webster, Whitman, Whitter, Wilson and Zaharis.

Fee Based, Full-Day Programs with Before and Aftercare

Tuition based preschools are State regulated by DHS.

Phone number 602-542-1025

Address 150 North 18th Avenue Phoenix, Arizona 85007

The MPS Career and Technical Education (CTE) Preschools are located on several High School campuses. The CTE preschools are tuition-based programs that provide an early learning laboratory setting which allows high school students to observe, engage and teach three and four-year old students under the direction of our professional staff. All children enrolled are required to be potty trained.

Locations: Dobson High School, Mesa High School, Red Mountain High School, and Skyline High School.

Morning childcare: 7:15 am - 9:00 am

Preschool Instruction: 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Afternoon childcare: 3:30 am - 4:00 pm

Payment and enrollment policies: Parents are responsible for fees based upon the program for which their student is registered. Program fees are charged monthly and are due on or before the first business day of the month.

Disenrollment Policy: Parents may request a program change/cancellation by email to early_learning@mpsaz.org.

If at any time the account is delinquent, your child will not be able to attend the preschool until the payment and the additional fees are paid in full. Parents are contacted via the email that was provided on the fee agreement and by phone before dismissal from the preschool.

Late Payment: If your account is delinquent, a late fee of \$25 may apply.

Payments: Payments are not accepted at individual school sites. All tuition payments are made through the online tuition portal.

Withdrawal Policy: Students will be dropped from a tuition or scholarship program if the account is delinquent on tuition payments. When the account is current, the student can attend preschool.

Refunds: Refunds will not be given for sick days, vacation days, days unattended, or withdrawal from the program.

Resting and naps - As required by licensing regulations, we provide time for resting each afternoon. A cot is provided for each child. We encourage you to send a small pillow, small blanket and small stuffed animal for your child's comfort. Resting is required in the full day CTE preschools with before and aftercare.

Breakfast - Children who attend the CTE preschools and the students arrive before 8:00 a.m. may bring their breakfast to class with them. Teachers will provide time and space for the child to eat their breakfast. Please adhere to the district health initiative by providing healthy breakfast options.

Preparing for Preschool - Parent Information

Daily Schedule: Mesa preschool classrooms provide your child with a variety of activities throughout the year. There will be a balance between whole group, small group and individual learning opportunities, indoor and outdoor play, and child-centered and teacher-directed activities. Although the order and times will vary, each classroom will include many of the following activities in their daily schedule: The daily schedule is posted in the classroom.

Clothing: Clothing should allow children to play and explore. In preschool we play with glue, paint, sand, and water every day! An extra set of play clothes should be left at school in case of emergencies.

Footwear: We encourage enclosed shoes that are safe for running and climbing. Flip flops and open toed shoes do not offer much protection from the bikes and wagons that are available.

Items to leave at home: We request that children do not bring candy, gum, or personal items from home. Valuable toys or other items may become lost or damaged in a classroom full of preschoolers. Toy weapons are not allowed at school.

Meals/Snacks: Your child's teacher will provide you with specific information about your child's classroom meal or snack plan. You will be notified if your child's classroom or classmates must take precautions for food allergies or medical conditions.

Health Screenings: During the year, school district personnel will check the hearing and vision of each preschool child. If any hearing or vision problems are detected, the parent or guardian will be notified so that an appropriate follow-up can take place.

Conferences: Parents and guardians have the opportunity to meet formally with their child's teacher two times a year during conference weeks. Information about the conference schedule will be communicated by your child's teacher. Class schedules may be changed during these weeks to accommodate conferences.

Child Find: If you have concerns about your child's development, you can request a screening through Mesa Public Schools. You can call (480) 472-0706 to schedule a free screening appointment.

Transportation: Parents are responsible to provide transportation to and from preschool. Only children with transportation written into their IEPs will be transported by MPS daily.

Attendance and Reporting Absences

- Consistent attendance is important for young children.
- Please call your child's school and teacher if your child will not be in class. This phone call is important to ensure the accuracy of attendance.
- Students will be dropped from the program if they have more than 10 consecutive unexcused absences.

Health Guidelines

Please keep your child home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Nausea or vomiting.
- Fever (of 100 degrees or more).
- Unidentified rash.
- Diarrhea.
- Eye redness and discharge.
- Ear drainage that is thick and colored.
- Sore throat with elevated temperature.
- Open, draining sores.
- Covid-19 related symptoms: fever, unusual cough or shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, fatigue.

Your child may return to school when they are fever free for 24 hours without Tylenol or Ibuprofen.

Before returning to preschool:

- Fever- A child must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to the program.
- Nausea, Vomiting, or Diarrhea- It is recommended that a child be free of symptoms for 24 hours prior to returning to the program.
- Colds- Children should stay home if they are uncomfortable or do not feel up to participating in activities or playing.
- Strep throat- If strep is diagnosed, wait at least 24 hours from the first dose of antibiotics before returning to the program.
- Communicable Diseases- Please send a note from your physician when your child returns to the program.

Returning to School After Prolonged Injury/Illness

A student returning to school following a serious or prolonged illness, injury, surgery, or other hospitalization must have written permission by a licensed medical provider to attend school, including any recommendations regarding physical activity/restrictions or limitations related to the school setting.

A student returning to school following a medical visit that required sutures (stitches, staples), ace bandage (elastic bandage, sling), cast, splints, crutches, cane, walker, knee walker/scooter, or a wheelchair must provide written permission from a licensed medical provider to attend school. This written permission must include recommendations and/or restrictions related to physical activity, mobility and safety in the school setting. All equipment must be provided by the parent or guardian.

Safety Guidelines

Emergency/accident procedure: In case of minor injuries, your child will be treated by school staff, and you will be informed about the injury when you pick up your child. All assistants are CPR and First Aid certified.

In the case of more serious injuries, first aid will be administered, and the parent or guardian will be notified by telephone to pick up the child for further care. If the parent or guardian cannot be located, a person listed on the emergency card will be called to take the child for further care.

In case of a school-wide emergency such as a lockdown, fire drill, or relocation, each class will follow the specific plan designated and practiced by your child's school.

Medication: School district policies on administering medications will be followed. When it is necessary for a student to take medication during school hours, the following requirements must be met:

Any medication that is to be given for more than 5 days will require a physician's order. To ensure student safety, the parent/guardian should transport medications to and from school.

1. Prescription medication must be in the ORIGINAL container with a non-expired prescription label.
2. Over-the-counter medications must be in the ORIGINAL container with the original package directions.
3. Age-appropriate dosage as stated on the label will be dispensed.
4. A medication consent form must be signed by the parent/guardian for us to administer medication to the child.

5. Name of student, dosage, time, dates to be given, and the name of the medication must be clearly stated.
6. It is recommended that when you get a prescription filled that you request a separate “school bottle” from the pharmacy. This is especially important with liquid medication (such as antibiotics) that have to be refrigerated.
7. All inhalers, self-carry or not, must have a pharmacy-placed label on them or have the inhaler inside the box that has the pharmacy label placed on the outside of the box. Inhalers not properly labeled are not allowed per District policy.
8. Medications given three times a day are discouraged at school. Please make arrangements to give these medications before and after school.
9. Narcotic pain medication will not be given at school.
10. Medications brought to school and not meeting the necessary requirements, will not be dispensed. The medication will be locked in the Health Office until a parent/guardian verifies the medication, signs the proper forms or takes it home.
11. Please contact one of the Health Office staff for information regarding the procedure for Epi-Pens.

Insurance

Mesa Public Schools carries property and casualty liability coverage for each preschool classroom. A copy of the insurance coverage is posted on the Parents’ Board next to the handbook and all other DHS licensing documents.

Pesticide Warning

Each preschool site is regularly inspected for pests. Notices are posted at least 48 hours before the site will be sprayed. Notices are posted on the school’s office door. Parents may obtain more information from your school office.

Arrival and Pick Up

Please bring your child to school on time. Routines are essential to young children and make children feel more secure and comfortable. Children arriving late and leaving early disrupt the classroom routine and may be difficult for children to adjust to their schedule. Teachers are not available to supervise children before or after class hours. We strive for arrival and dismissal time to be a pleasant transition for you and your child. Please let your child's teacher know if they can assist in helping to make this transition as smooth as possible.

Arrival and dismissal can be hectic for families, children and staff. Although communication is very important, we ask that parents understand when teachers need to end a conversation in order to tend to and supervise the children. A parent can always ask for a meeting with their child's teacher. Remember, any adult picking up your child must be listed on the emergency card or you have given permission directly to the teacher. Staff may ask for a **picture ID** anytime they are not familiar with the adult who is picking up.

Late pick-up: Children should be picked up no later than 10 minutes after class dismissal. Staff are not able to watch children outside the programs posted hours. A \$15 late pick-up fee/invoice will be sent home following the first late pick up that is documented.

Reporting Child Abuse

All MPS employees are mandatory reporters and must report, or cause a report to be made, when there is a reasonable cause to believe that a student has been abused. School employees who, in good faith and on the basis of reasonable grounds, make a child-abuse report are protected from any civil or criminal liability in connection with such a report.

Preschool Curriculum

Creative Curriculum:

- The Creative Curriculum for Preschool empowers children to be confident, creative, and caring learners through play-based, hands-on investigations—a research-based approach that incorporates language, literacy, and mathematics throughout the day.

Sound Sensible:

- Sounds Sensible is the first level of S.P.I.R.E. [Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence], a systematic, multisensory reading and language arts program for the first level of any core program or as supportive/supplementary instruction for beginning readers in Grades preK-1.

Touch Math:

- TouchMath is a multisensory math program that makes critical math concepts engaging and accessible for all students.

Social Skills:

All preschool students are learning to socialize and regulate their emotions. We use a variety of curriculum to support social emotional development including: National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) Peer Mediated Skills / Friendship lessons and ZONES of Regulation.

We do not expel or suspend students who are enrolled in preschool.

How to Support Your Child's Learning at Home

Basic Daily Routines:

- Bring your child to school on time.
- Make sure they get enough sleep and eat well.
- Dress them for the weather and active play.
- Pick them up on time.

Support Learning and Development:

- Read with your child every day.
- Visit the library together.
- Talk and listen to your child often.
- Ask questions and encourage conversation.
- Teach them letters, sounds, and simple songs or rhymes.
- Make reading and storytelling a daily habit.

Problem-Solving and Emotions:

- Help your child solve problems by asking questions and guiding them.
- Talk about feelings and teach ways to manage emotions (deep breaths, quiet space, favorite toy).
- Set clear, simple rules. Show and praise positive behavior.

Learning Through Play:

- Play counting games using everyday objects.
- Use long, clear sentences to build language skills.
- Let your child help with cooking simple tasks.
- Give instructions in 2–3 steps.

Limit Screen Time:

- Keep screen time under 1 hour per day of children's programming with an adult.
- Avoid screens in your child's bedroom.

Creative and Social Play:

- Offer art supplies and draw or color together.
- Encourage play with other children to build social skills.

Positive Behavior Support:

- Mesa preschools use Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS):
 - Focus on positive relationships, supportive environments, and emotional support.
 - Prevent challenging behavior by reinforcing good behavior during daily routines.
 - Provide targeted help if needed—no suspensions or expulsions in preschool.

25-26 Preschool Parent Calendar

Mesa Unified School District, Preschool Parent Calendar 2025-2026			
July 31st, 2025	Thursday	First day for Instructional Assistants	First Day of School for student's preschool-12th grade
September 1, 2025	Monday	Labor Day	NO SCHOOL
October 3, 2025	Friday	End of quarter grading - extra early release	No KU Preschool Student's, CTE regular schedule
October 6-10, 2025	Mon-Fri	Fall Break	NO SCHOOL
October 13, 2025	Monday	Professional Learning Day for staff	NO Preschool Student's; Including CTE Programs
October 16-17, 2025	Thursday/Friday	Parent Teacher Conferences: Elementary Schools out early	Preschool Class times: AM 9:00-11:00 PM 2:00-4:00. CTE regular Schedule
November 11, 2025	Friday	Veterans Day (observed)	NO SCHOOL
November 26-28, 2025	Wed. - Fri.	Thanksgiving break	NO SCHOOL
December 18, 2025	Thursday	End of quarter grading	No Preschool Student's; CTE regular schedule
December 19, 2025 - January 2, 2026	Fri. - Fri.	Winter break	NO SCHOOL
January 5, 2026	Monday	Professional Learning Day for staff	No Preschool Student's; including CTE Programs
January 15-16, 2026	Thursday & Fri.	Parent Teacher Conferences: Elementary Schools out early	Preschool Class times: AM 9:00-11:00 PM 2:00-4:00. CTE regular Schedule
January 19, 2026	Monday	Martin Luther King Jr Day	NO SCHOOL
February 16, 2026	Monday	Presidents Day	NO SCHOOL
March 13, 2026	Friday	End of quarter grading - extra early release	No Preschool Student's; CTE regular schedule
March 16-20, 2026	Mon. - Fri.	Spring Break	NO SCHOOL
April 3, 2026	Friday	Spring holiday	NO SCHOOL
May 19, 2026	Tuesday		Last day of Preschool
May 21, 2026	Thursday	CTE Programs run at regular hours	Last day of school for CTE Programs
May 23, 2026	Friday		Last contract day for Teachers, Nurses, Counselors, Social Workers, & Speech Language Technicians
Preschool days are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.			
CTE Program days are Monday - Friday.			