



Pre-K Team

Teacher	Room #	Phone extension	Email
Mrs. Lauren Kolack	150	87316	lkolack@cps.edu
Ms. Morgan Ochoa	150	87316	mchoa35@cps.edu
Mrs. Adriana Rodriguez- Jordan	149	87337	arodriguez451@cps.edu
Ms. Ellen Bloss	148	87336	ebloss1@cps.edu
Mrs. Elizabeth Connelly	147	87334	emcampbell@cps.edu
Mrs. Stephanie Gil	147	87334	sgil6@cps.edu
Ms. Jessica Braunstein	146	87335	jabraunstein@cps.edu
Ms. Renee Tzakis	146	87335	rtzakis@cps.edu

Teacher Introductions

Welcome to Pre-k! My name is Ellen Bloss and I am one of the full-day teachers! This will be my fourth year at Locke, and third year in Pre-k. I absolutely love preschool and truly value and appreciate the opportunity we have as educators to help young learners grow through play as they learn social skills, problem solving skills, and pre-academic skills. As primary year teachers, we have a unique opportunity to help children grow and establish a positive view on school as they begin to learn about the world around them and make friends along the way. Students in my classroom are empowered to use their 'power to choose' and will get to exercise this power both in the classroom through play, and immersed in nature.

Outside of school, I love to be outside, spend time with my family (I have 5 nieces and nephews and am obsessed with them), and friends, go on walks, read, and do yoga. I am so excited to meet my new students this year as we create a safe, collaborative classroom community together; it's going to be a great year!

¡Bienvenidos a Pre-K! Mi nombre es Adriana Rodriguez-Jordan y soy la maestra bilingüe del programa de Pre-Kínder de jornada completa. Este es mi decimoquinto año en Locke, y sigo sintiendo una inmensa alegría al ver a los niños aprender, crecer y descubrir el mundo a través del juego. Fuera del aula, soy la orgullosa mamá de una hermosa niña de un año que me mantiene sonriendo y muy ocupada. También disfruto viajar, leer, probar nuevos restaurantes por la ciudad y pasar tiempo con mis seres queridos. Obtuve mi licenciatura en Educación de la Primera Infancia en la Dominican University y mi maestría en Inglés como Segundo Idioma y Educación Bilingüe en

el American College of Education. Creo firmemente que la exploración, el juego, la naturaleza y el descubrimiento contribuyen a formar niños equilibrados; por ello, dedicaremos gran parte de nuestro tiempo a aprender mediante experiencias prácticas y conexiones significativas con el mundo que nos rodea. ¡Me entusiasma mucho construir una comunidad de aula afectuosa, colaborativa y alegre junto a sus hijos y familias durante este año escolar!

Welcome to Pre-K!

My name is Adriana Rodriguez-Jordan, and I am the bilingual full-day Pre-K teacher. This is my 15th year at Locke, and I continue to feel so much joy watching children learn, grow, and discover the world through play. Outside of the classroom, I am the proud mom of a beautiful one-year-old who keeps me smiling and busy! I also enjoy traveling, reading, trying new restaurants around the city, and spending time with my loved ones. I earned my Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Dominican University and my Master's degree in English as a Second Language & Bilingual Education from American College of Education. I strongly believe that exploration, play, nature, and discovery help create a well-balanced child, so we will spend a great deal of time learning through hands-on experiences and meaningful connections with the world around us. I am excited to build a caring, collaborative, and joyful classroom community with your children and families this school year!

Welcome to Pre-K! My name is Stephanie Gil and I am your child's half-day Bilingual/Gen-Ed Teacher this school year. This is my 6th year at Locke! I look forward to working with you and your child this school year. I am excited by the anticipation of the countless milestones we will reach as a class and those your child will reach as an individual. I am excited for all we will accomplish together!

¡Bienvenidos a Pre-K! Mi nombre es Stephanie Gil y soy la maestra bilingüe de educación general de medio día de su hijo/a este año escolar. ¡Este es mi 6th año en la escuela Locke! Espero trabajar con usted y su hijo/a este nuevo año. Estoy emocionado por la anticipación de los innumerables hitos que alcanzaremos como clase y aquellos que su hijo/a alcanzará como individuo. ¡Estoy emocionado por todo lo que lograremos juntos!

Welcome to Pre-K! My name is Elizabeth Connelly and I am one of the special education teachers in the half-day program. I teach because I am a life-long learner. I learn something new from my students daily. I have been teaching for 17 years. This is my 11th year at Locke. I believe each child learns their best through play and exploration. I believe that playing is the best way for students to gain knowledge and learn problem solving skills, social skills as well pre-academic skills.

Welcome to Pre-K! My name is Renee Tzakis and I am one of the special education teachers on the team!! I teach because I had an influential junior high teacher who made a difference in my education and I want to do the same for other children. I love teaching and have been involved in Early Childhood education as a teacher and a director for the past 16 years. This will be my 4.5 year at Locke. To quote Aristotle, my philosophy of education is, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." I am passionate about helping all children thrive and truly look forward to getting to know you and your child as we learn and grow together this school year!

Welcome to Pre-K! My name is Morgan Ochoa (you can call me Ms. Morgan!) and I am one of the Special Education teachers. I am very passionate about working with children and dedicated to helping all students succeed. I am also passionate about teaching children as people first, and then

as students. This is my sixth year in CPS and my fifth year here at Locke! I am looking forward to all of the learning and growing we will be doing this year!

Welcome to Pre-K! My name is Lauren Kolack (you can call me Ms. Lauren) and I am the general education teacher in one of the half-day classrooms. I absolutely love the preschool years because my students are so full of wonder and curiosity. We have so much fun exploring the world together. I have been teaching preschool for over a decade now and I love it more every year. I can't wait to get to know my new students and start learning along with them!

Welcome to Pre-K at Locke! My name is Jessica Braunstein, and you can call me Ms. Jessica. I am the general education teacher in one of the full-day classrooms. This is my 10th year teaching preschool or kindergarten, and my 2nd year teaching at Locke. I went to Chicago Public Schools as a child, and I feel very fortunate to now teach for CPS. As a teacher, I try to instill a love of reading & books, art, animals, and the natural world in students. I look forward to building relationships with your child and your family in the new school-year!

Preschool Beginning of Year Essentials

ALL STUDENTS WILL NEED:

- A FULL SIZE backpack that will fit a regular sized folder.
- **FULL DAY ONLY** A sturdy folder with 2 pockets to go back and forth from school
- 2 sets of dry clothes (pants, shirts, socks, underwear) in a Ziploc bag labeled with student's name
- Labeled reusable water bottle
- A 4x6 recent family photo: please write your students name on the back
- **FULL DAY ONLY** Blanket (Child must be able to fit it in backpack)

Pre-K (HALF-DAY) Wish List

No school supplies are necessary, but we gladly accept donations. Some of the items you can donate are as follows...

- *Disinfectant wipes (Clorox and/or Lysol)
- *FOAMING Hand soap
- *Paper towels
- *Kleenex
- *Ziploc Bags (gallon & jumbo)
- *Glue Sticks
- *White Cardstock
- *Playdoh

Pre-K (FULL-DAY) Wish List

No school supplies are necessary, but we gladly accept donations. Some of the items you can donate are as follows...

- * Disinfectant Wipes (Clorox or Lysol)
- * Hand Sanitizer
- * Kleenex
- * Assorted Bandages
- * Black Expo Dry erase Fine Tip/ Low Odor Markers
- * Play-doh (not for Room 146)
- * Liquid Hand Soap
- * Black Felt Tip Pens/ Ultra Fine Markers
- * White Cardstock
- * Paper towels
- * Baby wipes
- * Glue Sticks

Important Dates

PreK Open House (2 sessions)	Wednesday, August 19, 2026	4:00-4:30 pm 4:30-5:00 pm
Back to School Bash	Wednesday, August 19, 2026	5:00-7:00 pm
First Day of School <i>Kinder-8th Grade</i>	Monday, August 24, 2026	7:45am-2:45pm
First Day of School <i>PreK</i>	Tuesday, August 25, 2026	7:45am-2:45pm

CPS Calendar

Monday, August 24, 2026	<i>Kindergarten- 8th grade-</i> First Day of School
Tuesday, August 25, 2026	<i>Prek-</i> First Day of School
Monday, September 7, 2026	No School/ Labor day
Friday, September 25, 2026	No School/ Professional Development Day
Monday, October 12, 2026	No School/Indigenous People's Day
Monday, November 2, 2026	No School/Parent Teacher Conference
Tuesday, November 3, 2026	No School/Election Day
Wednesday, November 11, 2026	No School/ Professional Development Day
Monday, November 23- Fri. Nov. 27, 2026	No School/Thanksgiving Holiday
December 21, 2026 - January 4, 2027	Winter Break
Tuesday, January 5, 2027	Students Return to School
Monday, January 18, 2027	No School/M.L. King Day
Friday, January 29, 2027	No School/ Professional Development Day
Monday, February 15, 2027	No School/ Presidents' Day
Tuesday, February 23, 2027	No School/ Professional Development Day
Monday, March 22 -Friday, March 26, 2027	Spring Break
Monday, March 29, 2027	Students Return to School
Tuesday, April 6, 2027	No School/Professional Development Day
Monday, April 12, 2027	No School/ Parent Teacher Conference
Monday, May 31, 2027	No School/Memorial Day

Thursday, June 10, 2027	Prek ONLY- Last day of school (Full Day)
Friday, June 11, 2027	Kinder- 8th grade- Last day of school (Full Day)

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS	
Progress Reports sent to Parents:	Report Cards to Parents:
September 24, 2026 December 11, 2026 February 26, 2027 May 6, 2027	Monday, November 2, 2026 (Conferences) Thursday, January 28, 2027 (Sent Home) Monday, April 12, 2027 (Conferences) Friday, June 11, 2027 (Sent Home)

General Pre-K Information

School hours: Full Day: 7:45 am - 2:45 pm ½ day AM: 7:45 am - 10:20 am ½ day PM: 12:10 pm -2:45 pm
Entry and Exit Procedures: Students in Rooms 146, 147, & 148 should line up at the north entrance of the Pre-K building near the playground. Students in Rooms 149 & 150 should line up at the south end of the building by the blue field. Teachers and/or assistants will meet students at entry time and escort them to class. Students arriving after 7:55 a.m. (morning session) or 12:20 p.m. (afternoon session) must enter through the main entrance on Oak Park and obtain a tardy slip. At dismissal, students will be released one at a time directly to a parent or approved adult. For safety, students will only be released to individuals listed on the Release Form. Staff will ask for ID if the person picking up the child is unfamiliar.
Uniform Policy: Appropriate dress encourages better school behavior. Dress and grooming should not disrupt the learning process. Parents are to make sure that their child complies with this policy. Consequences will be given to those students who do not comply with the uniform dress code policy requirements. <u>TOPS-</u> Polo shirt (plain white or navy blue with no logos or writing) or polo shirt with school logo. Long or short sleeve polo shirts are acceptable. <u>BOTTOMS-</u> Plain dark blue pants. No jeans, no leggings as a substitute for pants. <u>SKIRT/SHORTS/JUMPERS-</u> Plain navy blue or black, age appropriate length for girls in grades Pre-K-4, knee length for girls in grades 5-8. <u>SWEATERS/SWEATSHIRTS-</u> Solid white or solid navy blue. Sweatshirts and hoodies with school logos are acceptable. <u>GYM UNIFORM-</u>

Top: Locke School T-shirt or uniform plain polo shirt in white or navy blue.

Bottom: Locke School sweatpants, shorts, or solid plain dark blue pants. No jeans.

SCHOOL SPIRIT/ COLLEGE DAY FRIDAYS- Any Locke School/College sponsored shirt and regular fit dark blue jeans permitted. No bare midriff! Regular school uniforms may also be worn.

FIELD TRIP UNIFORM- Standard school uniform is required.

SHOES- Parents discretion however no high heels, flip flop sandals, crocs or platform shoes are allowed. **Velcro gym shoes are preferred.**

UNIFORME ESCOLAR:

El vestimento apropiado promueve un mejor comportamiento escolar. Los padres deben asegurarse de que sus hijos cumplan con esta política. Se darán consecuencias a aquellos estudiantes que no cumplan con los requisitos de la política del código de uniforme.

CAMISA: Camisa de polo (blanca o azul marino sin logos ni escritura) o camisa de polo con el logotipo de la escuela. Las camisas polo de manga larga o corta son aceptables.

PANTALONES- Pantalón azul oscuro liso. No jeans, no leggings como sustituto de los pantalones.

FALDA / PANTALONES CORTOS / JUMPERS - Azul marino liso o negro, longitud adecuada para la edad de las niñas en los grados Pre-K-4, longitud de la rodilla para las niñas en los grados 5-8.

SUDADERAS - Blanco o azul marino sólido. Se aceptan sudaderas azul marino o sudaderas con capucha con el logotipo de LOCKE School.

UNIFORME DE GYM-

CAMISA: Camiseta de Locke School o camisa polo en blanco o azul marino.

PANTALONES: Pantalones sudaderos de Locke School, pantalones cortos o pantalones de color azul marino. No jeans.

VIERNES- ESPÍRITU DE LA ESCUELA / DÍA DE LA UNIVERSIDAD: Los viernes se permite cualquier camisa con el logo de la escuela o de cualquier Universidad. Los viernes también se permiten pantalones Jeans oscuros de corte regular. ¡Ningún estómago desnudo! Un uniforme escolar regular también puede ser usado.

UNIFORME DE VIAJE - Se requiere uniforme escolar estándar.

ZAPATOS: a discreción de los padres, sin embargo, no se permiten tacones altos, sandalias, crocs, o zapatos con plataforma. Los tenis con velcro serán lo mejor.

Cell Phone Policy:

Cell phones are not allowed to be used on school property. NO cell phones are allowed in Preschool.

Política del teléfono celular:

No se permite el uso de teléfonos celulares en la propiedad de la escuela. NO se permiten celulares en preescolar.

Recess Policy:

All students should be sent to school dressed appropriately for the weather. Please plan to keep a complete set of clothes at school in your child's cubby, send it in a plastic bag with your child's name on it. If your child has an accident and clothes are sent home, please send a replacement set. Our students will be outside for recess following the below guidelines. It is important to remember that recess is an important part of a child's well-being.

GUIDELINES:

- Above 32 degrees F; Recess should be held outdoors.

- Below 32 degrees F with or without wind chill: Teacher/Principal discretion
- Below 15 degrees F with or without wind chill: Recess should be held indoors.

Recreo:

Todos los estudiantes deben ser enviados a la escuela vestidos apropiadamente para el clima. Nuestros estudiantes estarán afuera para el recreo siguiendo las siguientes reglas. Es importante recordar que el recreo es una parte importante de nuestro bienestar.

Reglas:

- Más de 35 grados F con o sin viento: el recreo debe realizarse al aire libre.
- Entre 34 grados F y 15 grados F con o sin sensación de frío: discreción del director (LOCKE SCHOOL: K-4th estará adentro y 5th-8th tendrá la opción)
- Por debajo de 15 grados F con o sin viento frío: el recreo debe mantenerse en el interior.

Additional Grade Level Information...

What can I do to prepare my child for Pre-K?

- Read everyday
- Talk with your child often and narrate the world around you
- Foster independence by practice self-help skills such as
 - putting on a coat & zipping it
 - washing hands
 - using bathroom independently
 - cleaning up after a task
 - following a one step direction (get shoes, put on coat, etc.)

¿Qué puedo hacer para preparar a mi hijo para Pre-K?

- Leer todos los días
- Habla con tu hijo/a; narrar el mundo que te rodea
- Fomentar la independencia mediante la práctica de habilidades de autoayuda tales como
 - ponerse un abrigo
 - lavándose las manos
 - usar el baño de forma independiente.
 - limpiar después de una tarea
 - seguir una dirección de un paso (conseguir zapatos, ponerse un abrigo, etc.)