Internationally-Recognized Early Childhood Experts Recognize that New Mexico PreK Works!

Accountability and Evaluation

In addition to the classroom observational assessments conducted by program staff, the New Mexico Office of Education Accountability (DFA) contracted with the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) to evaluate the New Mexico PreK initiative as a whole. Their evaluations have found that the New Mexico PreK Program has a statistically significant and meaningful impact on children’s early language, literacy and mathematical development. Specifically NM PreK increased children’s vocabulary by as much as 54%. This outcome is particularly important because the measure is strongly predictive of general cognitive abilities and later reading success.

Children who attended NM PreK scored higher on a test of early math skills showing 50% more growth over the year. Skills tested include basic number concepts, simple addition and subtraction, telling time and counting money. And, NM PreK had large effects on children’s understanding of print concepts, increasing children’s print awareness by as much as 116%. Children who attended New Mexico PreK know more letters, more letter-sound associations and are more familiar with words and book concepts than their counterparts without PreK.

The final word on New Mexico PreK was provided by a four-year old in Albuquerque who asked his teacher, “Excuse me, is this PreK?” When the teacher responded “Yes, it is.”, he said enthusiastically, “Well, I LIKE IT!”

For more information about the NM PreK Early Learning Outcomes, Indicators and a complete set of the observation and documentation assessment tools go to www.NewMexicoPreK.org
Teachers Know that PreK Works!

Teachers overwhelmingly support PreK, noting the growth that takes place in children over the year and often citing the quality professional development and support provided by New Mexico PreK that has increased their skills and strategies in teaching young children.

What do teachers say about PreK?
“Being part of PreK has opened my eyes to many aspects of teaching. It has allowed me to attend teacher conferences and special training that helped me become a better teacher and meet the needs of the young children of Mescalero.”

How Does PreK Measure the Growth, Development and Learning that Parents and Teachers Observe?
New Mexico has developed Early Learning Outcomes for 4-year-olds in seven different domains:

- Literacy
- Numeracy & Spatial Relations
- Self, Family & Community
- Approaches to Learning
- Scientific/Conceptual Understanding
- Aesthetic/Creativity
- Physical Development, Health & Well-Being

Research reinforces that a balanced and comprehensive program that encourages and tracks learning in all these domains is necessary for long-term success in school and in life. The PreK Early Learning Outcomes are what we can reasonably expect children to KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO when they enter kindergarten. The Outcomes also describe the necessary DISPOSITIONS TOWARD LEARNING that children need to be successful.

New Mexico PreK has developed an Observation and Documentation Assessment process to:

- Document child growth and development in all seven domains
- Inform curriculum and purposeful practice in the PreK classroom
- Serve as a communication tool with families and the receiving Kindergarten teacher

Indicators of growth and learning in each domain help teachers track children's development toward the Outcomes. It is essential for teachers to continually observe for these indicators and identify where children are in relation to the expected outcomes. This enables each teacher to clearly see and support continuous learning and development.

The outcomes and indicators guide the teachers by establishing reasonable expectations and benchmarks for children's learning and performance. With those expectations, then, each child can be identified as performing at some point on a continuum of progress toward an outcome.