

Combs

J.O. Combs Unified School District

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

Kindergarten Prep Parent Handbook

Ranch Elementary School

43521 N Kenworthy Avenue

San Tan Valley, AZ 85140

(480) 882-3530

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Kindergarten Prep! This fall will be an exciting time for you and your child, and we will do everything we can to make your child's experiences a positive one.

Kinder Prep serves four and five-year-olds (4 by Dec. 31). This handbook relates important information about the Kinder Prep program. Please read it thoroughly and if you have questions, please call the Coordinator of Community Education at 480-987-5310.

To receive maximum benefit from Kinder Prep, each child should be prepared to demonstrate the following skills:

- Recite first and last name
- Count to ten
- Cut with scissors

Other ways to assist in making a successful transition from home to school are by:

- Taking your child to the public library
- Having your child dress him/herself
- Expecting your child to do simple chores around your home.

In helping your child accomplish these skills, please remember that some children are not as ready as others to succeed in doing these tasks. If your child is resistant to these activities or not interested, wait for several weeks and try again. Learning should be fun and a time for growth for your child.

We are looking forward to working together with you as part of our team!

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Daily Schedule

Kinder Prep is exciting and unique in many ways. It is a positive, child-oriented program with a hands-on, active approach toward learning. This approach includes the extensive use of manipulatives, learning by doing, and encourages active involvement in problem-solving. The following is an example of a typical Kinder Prep day:

1. Whole group welcome & opening activities
2. Whole group story time
3. Whole group lesson – Reading, Writing, Math, Science, and Social Studies
4. Independent Activities – An extension or follow-up of whole group lesson
5. Centers
6. Recess – Independent or group activity
7. Closing activity and dismissal

Academics

The program follows an integrated curriculum that has been designed with week-by-week coordinated lessons covering a variety of objectives prescribed by the J.O. Combs Unified District. Adjustments and improvements are continually made to include innovative methods and practices. The J.O. Combs Early Learning team meets weekly for lesson planning sessions and to coordinate special events.

Language and Literacy

Language and literacy are foundational to the curriculum and are strongly supported by the Kinder Prep staff. We emphasize the introduction and mastery of pre-reading skills (letters, phonics, blending). We present one letter per week and surround the child with literature and activities involving its identifications, phonetic sound, and proper formation.

Math Skills

The program uses a variety of manipulatives that complement and enhance a child's natural desire to experience learning through concrete methods. We cover patterning, sorting, counting, more/less, adding/subtracting, and ordinal numbers.

Social and Emotional Development

Along with academics, your child's social and emotional development is fostered through lessons and activities that will help build self-confidence and self-esteem. The opportunity to work quietly, independently, and as part of a group, is interwoven throughout the program. Your child will further develop listening skills, the ability to cooperate and share with others, and verbal and reasoning skills. We encourage the students to ask questions and to ask for help when they do not understand the information. We strive to have each student feel good about trying their best and to know that it is okay to make mistakes. We provide a safe, nurturing, and positive environment while encouraging students to demonstrate respect for their peers and for the various teachers, aides, and administrators on our campus.

Homework

Fun family activities will be sent home periodically as reinforcement and extension of the material covered in the daily lessons, such as:

- letter, color, & number recognition
- emergent handwriting skills
- drawing & coloring

Kinder Prep Goals

Communication Skills

Reading & Language

- ◆ Children listen and respond to environmental sounds, directions, and conversations
- ◆ Children converse effectively in their home language for a variety of purposes relating to real experiences and different audiences
- ◆ Determine similarities and differences in shapes, size, and colors
- ◆ Show interest in listening to and reading stories
- ◆ Recognize own printed name
- ◆ Name letters of the alphabet and corresponding sounds
- ◆ Match uppercase and lowercase letters
- ◆ Communicate ideas clearly
- ◆ Tell/retell stories in sequence
- ◆ Organize pictures in sequence
- ◆ Follow simple oral instructions
- ◆ Recite simple rhymes and poems

Mathematics

- ◆ Children demonstrate an understanding of number and numerical operations
- ◆ Children develop knowledge of spatial concepts (e.g. shapes and measurement)
- ◆ Children understand patterns, relationships, and classification
- ◆ Children develop knowledge of sequence and temporal awareness
- ◆ Children will use mathematical knowledge to represent, communicate, and solve problems in their environment
- ◆ Discover and explore a variety of patterns
- ◆ Counts to 10
- ◆ Sort and classify objects
- ◆ Create and discuss story problems using manipulatives

Science, Health

- ◆ Children develop inquiry skills, including problem-solving and decision-making
- ◆ Children observe and investigate the properties of objects, both living and non-living
- ◆ Children explore the concept of change in both living and non-living entities and in the environment
- ◆ Children develop an awareness of the environment and human responsibility for its care
- ◆ Demonstrate interest in science
- ◆ Exhibit curiosity about the world
- ◆ Identify senses and describe how people use them
- ◆ Differentiate between man-made and natural objects

Safety and Nutrition

- ◆ Children develop the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices
- ◆ Children develop self-help and personal hygiene skills
- ◆ Children develop an awareness of potential hazards to their health
- ◆ Children develop competence and confidence in activities that require gross motor skills
- ◆ Children develop competence and confidence in activities requiring fine motor skills
- ◆ Explain what to do when approached by a stranger
- ◆ Practice good safety habits
- ◆ Demonstrate how to get help in an emergency
- ◆ Identify some foods as being less nutritious than others

Creative Arts

- ◆ Children express themselves and develop an appreciation for music
- ◆ Children develop an appreciation for dance and movement
- ◆ Children develop an appreciation for dramatic play and storytelling
- ◆ Children develop awareness and appreciation for visual arts (e.g., painting, sculpting, and drawing)

Additional Information

Kindergarten Prep is housed on the campus of Ranch Elementary School. The campus is located at 43521 N. Kenworthy Ave., San Tan Valley, AZ. The main office number is (480) 882-3530. Please call if your child is going to be absent from the program.

Kindergarten Prep is licensed through the
Arizona Department of Health Services
150 N. 18th Avenue, Suite 400
Phoenix, AZ 85007
602-364-2536

Inspection reports are available upon request at the Ranch office.
A certificate of liability is held through Arizona Risk Retention Trust, Inc.

Transportation

- Parents are responsible for transportation and must sign their child(ren) in and out of the program.
- Students will not be released to persons not listed on the enrollment form without specific written authorization signed and dated by the parent.
- Please be prepared to show ID.
- Field trips will not be taken as part of this program.

Registration and Tuition Payment Information

- Complete and return all registration forms to the District Office, 301 E. Combs Road. All forms must be complete before your child may attend Kinder Prep. A copy of your child's up-to-date immunization record is required for enrollment.
- Records concerning your child (ren) are considered confidential information and will only be accessible to appropriate school staff and a person designated by the Arizona Department of Health Services.
- At the time of registration, parents will be required to pay a non-refundable registration fee.
- Tuition is due the first of each month. The annual tuition fee is payable in ten (10) equal monthly installments. A late fee will be assessed if tuition is not received by the 5th of each month. Students will be withdrawn from the program if full tuition payment and any accrued late fees are not received

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on or before the 10th day of any month.

- Kinder Prep Registration & Tuition amounts are:
 - Kinder Prep AM 8:45am – 11:45am Monday – Friday \$295
 - Kinder Prep PM 12:45pm – 3:45pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday \$235
- Tuition Payment Options:

Monthly tuition payments must be made online at www.jocombs.org. To access the secure online payment system, click on the *Parent Resources* button under *Quick Links* on the left side of the home page and select “Payments For....” Log in using the username and password that you chose at registration.
- Any check returned by the bank or credit card payment that is denied will result in a Returned Item Fee. The original amount plus the Returned Item Fee must be paid. A child will be withdrawn from the program if the account is not brought up-to-date within ten (10) days of receiving notice from the District of the returned item.
- Enroll two or more children from the same family and receive a 20% tuition discount for the 2nd child. Discounted rates are available for employees of J.O. Combs Unified School District.
- A 5% discount is applied when the annual tuition is paid in full in the month of August.
- No tuition credit will be offered for absences or due to illness or vacation.
- Kinder Prep will follow the regular school calendar for holiday breaks and professional development days.
- Hours of operation for Kinder Prep are 8:45 - 11:45 a.m. Monday through Friday or 12:45-3:45 p.m. Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday.
- Please be prompt when picking up your child.
- Program fees are non-refundable.
- Kinder Prep accepts children whose families receive DES assistance. Please contact your case worker and have them call Community Education 480-987-5322 with your authorization. You will be contacted regarding the co-pay amount, if any.
- Our Kindergarten Prep program has partnered with the [First Things First – Quality First Initiative](#). Scholarships for Kinder Prep tuition are available through First Things First. If you are interested in a Kinder Prep scholarship, please complete the [application form](#) (available at jocombs.org) and make an appointment to submit the paperwork and determine eligibility. Please call the Community Education office at (480) 987-5310 to make your appointment.

Health and Safety

- Children who show symptoms of inflammation, fever, rash, or lice, or who are suspected of having a contagious or infectious disease or infestation, will not be accepted into the program until such symptoms are no longer evident.
- If a child develops symptoms of illness or infestation or is seriously injured at school, parents will be notified immediately.
- Permission to give medication must be received in writing from a parent or doctor and must follow J.O. Combs School District guidelines. Please contact the school nurse at 480-882-3533 to obtain proper medical forms.
- Children must be potty trained to attend Kinder Prep.
- In case of an emergency, as determined by the Kinder Prep staff or school nurse, paramedics will be called and the parent will be notified immediately. Parents will be responsible for all costs incurred in such emergencies.
- It is the parent’s responsibility to inform Kinder Prep staff of any changes in home phone or address, place of employment, business or cell phone numbers.
- Fire drills are held monthly. The escape plan is posted at each door.

Behavior Guideline

- Parents and teachers are viewed as partners in guiding the child's development and this team approach will be utilized. Parents will be kept abreast of concerns if they should arise.
- If the teacher and coordinator determine that a child cannot benefit from the program or presents a danger to self or other children, the child may be administratively withdrawn from the program.
- The following 5-step plan will be utilized to maintain a positive learning environment for all children.
 - Verbal warning – positive redirection
 - Placed away from the current activity – positive redirection
 - Phone call to parent
 - Conference on site with staff, parent and child
 - Request to withdraw from the program

Food and Nutrition

- Parents are encouraged to provide a snack and drink for your child. Please refrain from sending candy and soft drinks to school.
- Unsealed products and homemade items are not allowed. These guidelines are set by the state regulations.

Outdoor Play and Clothing

- Outdoor play is an important part of your child's day and total health. Weather permitting; the children will play outdoors each day. Please make sure that your child is dressed for the existing weather conditions.
- All clothing jackets, backpacks, and other personal belongings should be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name.
- Please dress your child for comfort. Your child should wear practical, washable clothes. Sturdy shoes or tennis shoes are recommended. Flip flops, some sandals, cowboy boots, and other slick-soled shoes may prevent children from playing freely and should not be worn.

Parent Involvement

- Kinder Prep staff welcomes comments and suggestions to improve the quality of care and education for your child. If areas of concern arise, the concern should be brought to the attention of the classroom staff before or after class. If additional communication is necessary, the coordinator will be available.
- Parents are encouraged to observe in the classroom and volunteer as often as possible.
- Parents are encouraged to keep abreast of information about the Kinder Prep Program and its operation by watching for special notices sent home with their children.

Pesticides

- We limit the use of pesticides and herbicides in our program. If it is necessary to use pesticides or herbicides, they are applied by a licensed professional when children are not present. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals used in pest control are kept on file at the J.O. Combs District Office. Notice of Pesticide Application with dates of application is posted at the site. Changes to these dates will be posted within 48 hours advance notice before application.

* * * Please sign, detach this portion of the page and return form to your Kinder Prep teacher * * *

**I have read, understand, and agree to the policies and procedures
as set forth in the Kindergarten Prep Parent Handbook.**

Parent/Guardian printed name

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Child's Name

Child's Name

Child's Name

Child's Name

Permission ____ is ____ is not granted to J.O. Combs Unified School District #44 to take photographs of my child (ren) for the purpose of group or individual projects for promotional materials.