

submitted by Dr. Robin Hooper



"I've got to find that recipe"

"Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood."

Fred Rogers

Registration for professional development available online using avatar:

<https://rochesterny.courseinsite.com>



Writing in Prekindergarten

Through sensory play a child discovers line and shape of letters.

CCLS: Domain 4, Communication, Language and Literacy: (Writes and draws spontaneously to communicate meaning with peers and adults during play.)

Pre-K: Even Better When it's All Day!

More Classrooms May Have a Full-Day Schedule, Starting in January

Our prekindergarten program is fun with a purpose. We teach our students to become more independent, to solve problems, to develop literacy and math skills, to relate to adults and other students appropriately, to use technology and to think creatively. Students gain many related skills in their classrooms each day they attend school.

Parents are every child's primary teachers. Our teachers and staff depend on the support of parents to help every child reach his or her potential for learning. One important way parents support learning is by making sure their children attend school regularly, in pre-K as well as higher grades. Regular attendance at school helps students remember skills they have learned, and it provides consistent practice of new skills. Simply put, students who attend more will achieve more. Consistent attendance also lets pre-K students interact with other children their age on a daily basis developing their social skills.

Time is one of the greatest gifts we can give to our students. More time in pre-K helps children to learn the skills they need to be successful in elementary school. That is why our District has applied for a state grant to fund more full-day prekindergarten classrooms. We expect to hear from the state later this month—and if the news is good, our new full-day programs will begin in January 2014. The number of classrooms and which ones become full-day will depend on the funding we receive.

Our pre-K team is excited about the potential to provide more time to our four-year-old students and their families. The full day would be approximately six hours long, with breakfast and lunch provided for students and a half-hour rest time. We are hoping to convert as many programs to a full-day schedule as possible. We will provide more specific information to parents as soon as the New York State Education Department notifies us about the grant. Keep your fingers crossed that we receive a significant award—and whether it's a half day or a full one, please make sure your child attends pre-K, every day!

Home School Connection



Twenty-five adults attended a workshop at WXXI on October 10. Host Cara Rager presented a lively session on nursery rhymes, classic stories and fairy tales. Parents and caregivers had the opportunity to make literacy take-home projects for their children during the workshop, and everyone was given a backpack full of resources, including books, a DVD and book lists. RPPP adults look forward to attending more sessions at the WXXI studio throughout the year on a variety of topics.

For additional information email :
patricia.dangler@rcsdk12.org

“Families and Communities shape the context in which children grow, framing children’s most important early experience and encounters with their environments.”

National Education Goals Panel

(Kagan, Moore, & Bredekamp, 1995)

Backpacks for UPK Children

Backpacks have been delivered to all UPK sites for entering UPK students (4 year olds). We are encouraging all teachers to use these as a way to communicate with families.

Since they are identical, identifying individual children’s bags can be challenging. For children’s security, encourage writing children’s names on the inside. Using children’s “Letter Link” as a tag can also help them to identify their backpack while supporting practice with letter sounds.



Friendship Children’s Center welcomes a parent’s interest in helping to prepare a healthy snack.



This supports NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core:

Domain 2: Physical Development and Health-Demonstrates eye-hand coordination and dexterity needed to manipulate objects.

Domain 5: Cognition and Knowledge of the World - Social Studies: (Identifies family members, family characteristics and family functions.)



Why Play in Preschool: Setting the Foundation by Margaret Spencer

What in the world are they doing in that preschool classroom? All they ever do is play. Have you ever thought or said that? If you have, you are not alone. We, who work in preschool classrooms, hear it all the time and not only from families but also from colleagues who work with older children.

But is it just random chaos that we see? Let's take a second look.

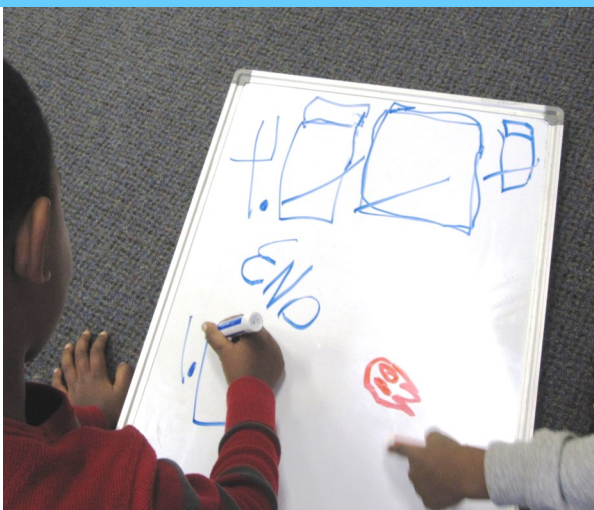
The guiding principles for the development of the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation to the Common Core state that early learning and development are multi-dimensional. Further, children are active learners and a primary approach to learning is through purposeful play.

Play is children's work and they can be very serious about it. There is nothing random about what goes on in the Pre-K classroom. In this setting, play is planned and purposeful. Every item placed on shelves for children's use is placed with children's interests, abilities and learning growth in mind. As they engage with the materials, interact with each other and with the adults in the room they are building skills that will support their entry into Kindergarten. They are becoming creative problem solvers as they encounter and find solutions for conflicts; they are learning about Math and Physics as they work in the Block Area creating structures that collapse and get rebuilt again and again; they are practicing skills necessary for learning reading as they create lists, menus, signs and messages in the House Area; they are learning about measurement and capacity as they fill containers with sand and water and they are expressing who they are and what they care about when they work in the Art Area.

Each day children engage in the Plan/Work/Recall process. In small groups at Planning Time, they decide where they will play, what they will use, how they will use what they choose and who they will play with. Then they get down to business and follow through with their plans during Work Time. Plans often change, and that is fine because then new plans can be made. At the end of Work Time children gather again in their small groups and have Recall Time where they review and share what they did while they were playing.

Just playing? Yes, and it is hard, important work!

The children below are engaged at Work Time. Look closely at what they are learning.



"Taking time to write a message with a friend"

Domain 4: Communication, Language, and Literacy:
(Writes and draws spontaneously to communicate with peers or adults during play)

**Domain 5: Cognition and Knowledge of the World–
Mathematics (duplicate and extend simple patterns
using concrete objects)**

"Setting the table in the House Area"



Domain 5: Approaches to Learning – (Actively explores how things in the world work))



"Investigating a box"



Rochester City School District
Department of Early Childhood
131 W. Broad St.
Rochester, NY 14614



Phone: 585-262-8140
Fax: 585-262-8273
sandra.hess@rcsdk12.org
margaret.spencer@rcsdk12.org
www.rcsdk12.org/PreK

Staying Connected

Universal Pre-K Website

www.rcsdk12.org/prek

The UPK website can really enhance the home-school connection. Here, parents can find information about program locations, special education services, and our curriculum. Many teachers have already developed their own classroom website containing daily routine, classroom photos, field trip information and useful educational links. Some even include wish lists of items they can use in the classroom. Parents can access individual teacher websites from the Pre-K home page. For teachers, the Technical Support section can be helpful for finding developmentally appropriate music and movement activities (Music Building Blocks and Moving Minds Programs) for their classrooms. If you have any questions or comments, please contact M'Lou Speranza (M'Lou.Speranza@rcsdk12.org) or Bonny VanDerMeid (Bonny.Vandermeid@rcsdk12.org). Check out the website today!