

Early Kindergarten Transition Program

Portland Public Schools
SUMMARY – Summer 2019

EKT is a school-based, family-oriented summer program designed to increase family engagement in school, improve children's attendance and success in school. Parents and children who have historically struggled with the start of school become school and classroom leaders.

THE GOALS: Increase family engagement, reduce chronic absenteeism, and promote children's success in school.

THE PROGRAM

Children attend school every morning for three weeks (15 half-day sessions) in summer. Their adults attend meetings twice a week (6 half-day sessions). Classrooms are supported by bilingual educational assistants and para educators. Meals are provided, and child care is offered during parent meeting times. PPS contracts with SUN Community Schools to implement EKT in collaboration with school staff. PPS, P-3/Early Learners provides curricula, trainings, coaching, and fidelity oversight. Programs are only offered in Title I schools.

- BUILDING CHILDREN'S CAPACITY
 - Children "practice" kindergarten with teachers in their school in a classroom of 20 children.
- PARENTS AS PARTNERS
 - Adults participate in group time two days each week to learn about their school, connect with school staff and other parents, and learn strategies for extending their child's learning at home.
- CURRICULUM
 - Children: Social/emotional skills, classroom expectations, literacy, school routines
 - Adults: Importance of attendance, how to engage in school, how to read interactively, ways to promote math concepts, how to encourage young writers, positive behavior strategies/brain research, and the importance of language development at home
- COLLABORATION:
 - SUN Community schools, Multnomah County Library, Early Learning Multnomah, Home Forward, Child Care Resource and Referral, Children's Book Bank, , MESD, PPS departments (Title I, Special Education, ESL, Head Start, Nutrition Services, Early Learners)
 - Longitudinal program evaluation conducted by University of Portland and NWEA.
- HISTORY
 - PPS developed and launched the first EKT program at Woodmere and Whitman in 2010. It's now a Multnomah County program of SUN Community Schools' Kindergarten Counts program and has been replicated in all of the County districts and in over 40 schools.

PARTICIPANTS

- Children with no previous preschool or Head Start experiences, low income families, ELL families, historically underserved families, children receiving special education services
- **Participating schools for Summer 2019: Boise Eliot, Cesar Chavez, Harrison Park, James John, Kelly, King, Lee, Lent, Rigler, Scott, Vestal, Whitman, and Woodmere.**

RESULTS: Longitudinal data show EKT students have better attendance than their peers who do not attend EKT. And, a larger proportion of EKT students met benchmarks for the DIBELS test. *University of Portland and Northwest Evaluation Association (2015).*

Questions? Contact nhauth@pps.net