



Kinder Express Parent Handbook

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Kinder Express! This 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.

Students in the Kinder Express program attend a half-day kindergarten class with a certified teacher. The other half of the day is in the Kinder Express classroom, where extended learning opportunities and the reinforcement of concepts taught by the regular kindergarten teacher are combined with engaging social and developmental skill-building activities. The Kinder Express classroom will be led by a highly-trained paraprofessional, who works in collaboration with the regular kindergarten teacher, and is assisted by a classroom aide.

This handbook relates important information about the Kinder Express program. Please read it thoroughly and if you have questions, please contact the Coordinator of Community Education at 480-987-5322.

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

Daily Schedule

Kinder Express 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 Express 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 and the Arizona Department of Education. Adjustments and improvements are continually made to include innovative methods and practices. The Kindergarten teachers and Kinder Express paraprofessionals meet 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 Express staff. We reinforce the literacy skills taught in Kindergarten and surround the child with literature and activities involving letter identifications, phonetic sound, and proper letter 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 reinforce 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 his or her 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.

Transportation

- 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.
- Non-custodial parents will not be allowed to pick up a child unless there is a copy of the court order on file with the school office.
- Field trips may be taken as part of the regular Kindergarten curriculum.

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 Express. 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 \$65.00 non-refundable registration fee.
- Annual tuition is broken into 10 equal payments. Months that have fewer school days do NOT result in lower tuition payments.
- Tuition is due the first of each month. The annual tuition fee is payable in ten (10) equal monthly installments. A late fee of \$20.00 will be assessed if tuition is not received by the 10th of each month. Students will be withdrawn from the program if full tuition payment and any accrued late fees are not received on or before the 15th day of any month.
- Tuition Payment Options:
 1. In Person. Tuition payments can be made at the District Office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Payments cannot be accepted by Kinder Express staff or by the school office staff.
 2. Drop Box. Tuition payments can be made 24 hours a day via a drop box at the District Office. The drop box is located on the wall to the left of the main entrance at 301 E. Combs Road.
 3. Via U.S. Mail. Check or money order only, payable to J.O. Combs Unified School District, 301 E. Combs Rd., San Tan Valley, AZ 85140.
 4. Online at www.jocombs.org. Select the *Parent Resources* tab under quick links, select program, select product, fill in applicable information and then click Buy Now!

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- Any check returned by the bank or credit card payment that is denied will result in a \$35.00 Returned Item Fee. The original amount plus the \$35.00 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 entire school year tuition is prepaid by October 1.
- No tuition credit will be offered for absences or due to illness or vacation.
- Kinder Express will follow the regular school calendar for holiday breaks and professional development days.
- Hours of operation for Kinder Express are 8:15-11:30 and 12:15-3:05
- Please be prompt when picking up your child.
- Program fees are non-refundable.
- Kinder Express accepts children whose families receive DES assistance. Please contact your case worker and have him or her call Community Education 480-987-5322 with your authorization. You will be contacted regarding the co-pay amount, if any.
- A portion of the Kinder Express tuition payments may qualify for 2012 and 2013 **Arizona School Tax Credits**. Tax Credit forms are available at the district office and on the district webpage, www.jocombs.org. In designating tax credit donations, the funds (\$400 per calendar year for married couples, \$200 if filing as a single person) are returned to income tax filers in the form of an Arizona State Income Tax Credit. The forms must be submitted to the J.O. Combs District Office, 301 E. Combs Rd., no later than December 31.

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 to obtain proper medical forms.
- Children must be potty trained to attend Kinder Express.
- In case of an emergency, as determined by the Kinder Express 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 Express 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 paraprofessional, principal 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.
- Students will attend lunch as scheduled by the school office.

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 Express 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 Express Program and its operation by watching for special notices sent home with their children.

Additional Information

Kindergarten Express 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 your school's office.
A certificate of liability is held through Arizona Risk Retention Trust, Inc.

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

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

Parent/Guardian printed name

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

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.