



4K Early Learning News

October 2024

What do the first six weeks of school look like?



Starting school is a big deal and our youngest students are rocking it! They are already settling into their new school routines! I have been in rooms where kids already know where their backpacks go, where snacks and water bottles go, and how to follow the daily schedule. They are making friends, singing songs, and learning is happening everywhere!

The start of the year is focused on creating a sense of community in the 4K classroom. Some children have had experiences away from mom or dad and this is something they are accustomed to, other children this is their first time away from home, in a group setting. The first weeks of school are spent adjusting to being in school, understanding classroom routines, setting classroom expectations, and getting to know each other. Days have been filled with name games, classroom scavenger hunts that introduce the areas of the room, arrival and departure routines, and plenty of time for playing, fun, and laughter. Building trust and establishing relationships with students creates a safe and fun school environment.

For most of our learners, this is the FIRST time they have been to school. Many are learning how to sit at circle time, get in line, eat snacks or lunch at school, wash their hands, clean up, and wait their turn. Teachers spend time teaching basic school skills that they will not only use this year but throughout their educational journey.

We hope your students have come home singing new songs, talking about new friends, and are excited about school.

Thanks for sharing in this journey with us,
Elizabeth Knudten

4K Values



**WE TAKE
CARE OF
OURSELVES**



**WE TAKE
CARE OF
EACH OTHER**



**WE TAKE CARE
OF OUR
SCHOOL**



**NOS
CUIDAMOS**



**NOS
CUIDAMOS
UNOS A OTROS**



**CUIDAMOS
NUESTRA
ESCUELA**

We Take Care of Ourselves

Focus on Self-Help Skills and Independence

One of our primary focuses in 4K is helping our youngest learners become independent with their self-care tasks. Our goal is to empower all students to be self-sufficient, ensuring they can participate fully in both classroom activities and everyday routines.

Self-care skills encompass everything from **hanging up backpacks** and coats to managing folders, snacks, and water bottles upon arrival. To support these budding skills, we use visual aids that show students the steps they need to complete before starting their day. This routine helps build consistency and confidence in their ability to manage their own belongings.

Throughout the day, we encourage children to take care of themselves by **asking for what they need**. For example, if they need help, they're taught to ask a friend or teacher. Whether they want a specific color of paper or are wondering when snack time is, they are encouraged to explore their environment and problem-solve by checking the daily schedule or accessing supplies on their own.



**WE TAKE
CARE OF
OURSELVES**

As winter approaches, we focus on building independence in **putting on snow gear**, with a fun twist! Songs help remind kids of the important order: boots come **after** snow pants! In dramatic play, we have dolls and dress-up clothes, and we work on fine motor skills, such as threading beads on pipe cleaners, to strengthen fingers for tying shoes and zipping jackets.

Self-help also extends to bathroom and hygiene skills. In 4K, students are encouraged to be **independent in the bathroom**, which includes using the toilet and managing personal hygiene. We also focus on **building healthy habits** like coughing into elbows, blowing noses, and keeping toys out of mouths. Routines such as washing hands after using the toilet, after blowing noses, and before snack are embedded into our day.

We understand that these **self-help skills take time, practice, and support**. Teachers are there every step of the way, offering encouragement and guidance through picture supports, visual routines, songs, and stories.

If you have any questions about your child's self-care progress, we encourage you to connect with their teachers. We are always happy to share resources and strategies to ensure consistency between home and school. Together, we can help our 4K kiddos gain the confidence and skills to thrive independently!

When You:

*Cut it for me,
Write it for me,
Open it for me,
Set it up for me,
Draw it for me or
Find it for me,*

All I learn is:

that you do it better than me

We hold our fall conferences the week of October 21st. Your child's teacher will be sharing a sign-up with you to join them for a 15-20 minute time block to discuss your student's first few weeks of school.

Conferences will be offered at a variety of times in an effort to meet the needs of families. If you are not able to attend during the times offered please reach out to your child's teacher and together you can find a time that works.

NO SCHOOL Thursday, October 24 and Friday, October 25.

AMPLIFY CKLA Update

Our First Domain (Unit) is "All About Me!!"

Our new Literacy Curriculum is under way! We are so excited to start CKLA as a curriculum to increase alphabet knowledge, phonics and phonemic skills, as well as build our 4K vocabularies and background knowledge!



This curriculum supports the interests and skill building that already exists in 4K. We always start with helping students get to know their classmates, understand classroom routines and expectations, and build a classroom community. This first domain fits right into this.

In All About Me we are working on finding our own names- and the first letter in our names, and identifying the names of our friends. We are talking about our five senses, the different parts of our bodies like eyelashes, eyebrows, elbows, and knees! We will share the ways in which we are the same and what makes us "unique" (one of our new words). We are learning that we are all "humans", that even grown-ups start out as "infants", and there are things that each of us "prefer" different things.

All of these lessons help to build a strong understanding of self and others and help build our classroom communities.

Our next domain will be about our families and the communities we live in. Stay tuned for more great learning!

CLASS TIMES FOR SP4K

Elementary School Sites (Creekside, MeadowView, Northside, Token Springs):

AM: 7:40-10:23

PM: 11:42- 2:40 (1:30 Th.)

Partner Sites (All other 4K locations):

AM: 7:50-10:33



Why We Teach Through Play!

1. Children learn through their play.

Don't underestimate the value of play. Children learn and develop:

Cognitive skills – like math and problem solving in a pretend grocery store

Physical abilities – like balancing blocks and running on the playground

New vocabulary – like the words they need to play with toy dinosaurs

Social skills – like playing together in a pretend car wash

Literacy skills – like creating a menu for a pretend restaurant

2. Play is healthy.

Play helps children grow strong and healthy. It also counteracts obesity issues facing many children today.

3. Play reduces stress.

Play helps your children grow emotionally. It is joyful and provides an outlet for anxiety and stress.

4. Play is more than meets the eye.

Play is simple and complex. There are many types of play: symbolic, socio-dramatic, functional, and games with rules—to name just a few. Researchers study play's many aspects: how children learn through play, how outdoor play impacts children's health, the effects of screen time on play, to the need for recess in the school day.

5. Make time for play.

As parents, you are the biggest supporters of your children's learning. You can make sure they have as much time to play as possible during the day to promote cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional development.

6. Play and learning go hand-in-hand.

They are not separate activities. They are intertwined. Think about them as a science lecture with a lab. Play is the child's lab.

7. Play outside.

Remember your own outdoor experiences of building forts, playing on the beach, sledding in the winter, or playing with other children in the neighborhood. Make sure your children create outdoor memories too.

8. There's a lot to learn about play.

There's a lot written on children and play. Here are some [NAEYC articles and books about play](#).

David Elkind's *The Power of Play* (Da Capo, 2007 reprint) is also a great resource.

9. Trust your own playful instincts.

Remember as a child how play just came naturally? Give your children time for play and see all that they are capable of when given the opportunity.

10. Play is a child's context for learning.

Children practice and reinforce their learning in multiple areas during play. It gives them a place and a time for learning that cannot be achieved through completing a worksheet. For example, in playing restaurant, children write and draw menus, set prices, take orders, and make out checks. Play provides rich learning opportunities and leads to children's success and self-esteem.

Background Checks for School Volunteers

Background Check Needed Every 3 Years Volunteering at School or Fieldtrips...

The Sun Prairie Area School District recognizes that volunteers make valuable contributions to the district's schools and welcomes volunteers into the schools or attend student field trips. District policy requires that a criminal background check be completed prior to volunteering.

Prior to volunteering, please make sure you have a criminal background check completed and on file.

Student safety is our #1 priority.

If you are unsure if you have one on file or have any questions, please contact the school at 608-834-6503 for assistance. If you need to fill out a form, you can find it on the District website or the school office. [Info Here](#)

KOBUSSEN BUS NEWS for 4K Bus Riders

Please wait for your bus to stop

Please have your child wait by your side until the bus has come to a stop, has red lights flashing and the door is open. The drivers are checking for surrounding traffic to make sure it is safe for your child to approach the bus



Double-check your pick-up and drop-off times

Since we provide door-to-door busing we need to have everyone ready to get on the bus when it arrives in order to be at school on time. Please be at the pick-up/drop-off location 15 minutes prior to your scheduled time.

Early Release Thursdays

Elementary sites are released at 1:30

Community sites are released at 1:20.

That means they will arrive at your drop-off location 1 hour and 10 minutes earlier than other days.

Face-to-Face Pick up and Drop Off

Student safety is our primary concern. That is why our busing for 4K is door-to-door with the expectation of an adult being present. We want to keep our youngest scholars safe so whether you are meeting the bus at the end of a driveway or at a stop with K-5 students our bus drivers need to see an adult before they will allow 4K students off the bus.

Bus Tags

All eligible bus students will receive a bus tag on the first day of school. They must have their bus tags on their person. Your teacher will attach it to their backpack, please keep it attached to their backpack. Drivers will ask to see bus tags of students they don't recognize. If your child needs a replacement bus tag please let your teacher know.

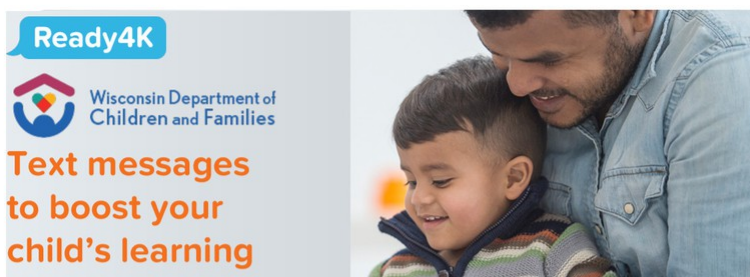
Kobussen

If your child will not be riding the bus or if you have any questions or concerns about busing throughout the school year, please contact Kobussen at 825-8700, ext 5509.

READY 4K

Exciting news! We've partnered with **Ready4K** to offer an evidence-based parenting curriculum to families and caregivers at no cost to you. You'll receive text messages with fun facts and easy tips to help your children learn and grow. No extra time or supplies are needed!

You'll soon be enrolled in **Ready4K**, which means you'll get text messages with fun facts and easy tips to help your children learn and grow. We believe in empowering caregivers as At Home Learning partners.



Welcome to Ready4K! The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families is excited to give you this FREE resource to help your child stay on track with their learning goals all year long.

How does Ready4K help my child learn?

Ready4K texts you 3 easy-to-do learning tips and activities each week. Each text message you will get is written for your child's age or grade. Research shows that doing Ready4K activities is a great way to help your child stay on track.

Ready4K tips **build on your daily routines**, like activities to use when getting dressed, during bath time, or when preparing a meal. No internet, extra time, or special materials are required.

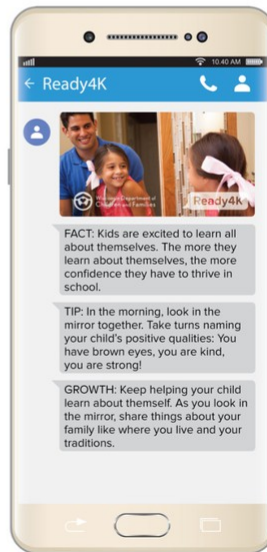
You'll also receive links to **Wisconsin resources** that many Wisconsin families find helpful.

What do I need to do?

As a Wisconsin family, your child's school will enroll you in the program.

There's **absolutely no cost**, though data & message rates may apply. You can opt out anytime by texting STOP to 70138.

Questions? Contact the program director at your child's school for more details.





Bienvenido a Ready4K! El Wisconsin Department of Children and Families nos emociona ofrecerle este recurso GRATIS para ayudar a su hijo/a a ir cumpliendo con sus metas de aprendizaje todo el año.

¿Cómo ayuda Ready4K a mi hijo a aprender?

Ready4K le envía cada semana mensajes de texto con 3 consejos y actividades fáciles de aprender. Cada mensaje de texto que recibe está dirigido al grado o edad de su hijo/a.

Las investigaciones indican que hacer las actividades de Ready4K es una excelente manera de mantener a su hijo aprendiendo.

Los consejos de Ready4K **desarrollan las rutinas diarias**, con actividades que puede usar mientras se visten, a la hora del baño, o mientras prepara la comida. No se requiere ni Internet, tiempo adicional, ni materiales especiales.

Recibirá enlaces que le conectarán con **recursos de Wisconsin** que muchas familias de Wisconsin encuentran útiles.

¿Qué tengo que hacer?

Como familia de Wisconsin, la escuela de su hija les inscribirá en el programa.

No hay costo en absoluto, pero pueden aplicarse tarifas de datos y mensajes. En cualquier momento usted puede cancelar la recepción de mensajes de texto enviando STOP al 70138.

Preguntas? Contacte al director del programa en la escuela de su hijo para más detalles.



Al firmar el presente documento usted acepta (i) el envío de este formulario a ParentPowered PBC, (ii) la inscripción en el Programa, (iii) las condiciones de uso de ParentPowered PBC disponibles en parentpowered.com/terms.html y su política de privacidad disponible en parentpowered.com/privacy.html, y (iv) recibir aproximadamente tres mensajes de texto por semana de Ready4K desde el número 70138, así como hasta aproximadamente 3 mensajes de texto semanales de apoyo comunitario de Ready4K desde el número 28922. Al proporcionarnos su número de teléfono celular, usted confirma que desea que ParentPowered le envíe información que consideremos pueda ser de interés para usted, lo cual implica el uso, de parte de ParentPowered, de tecnología de marcación automática para enviarle mensajes de texto al número de teléfono celular que nos dio. Si bien no existe ningún costo para inscribirse, pueden aplicarse tarifas de datos y mensajes. En cualquier momento usted puede cancelar la recepción de mensajes de texto de Ready4K enviando STOP al 70138, o cancelar la recepción de mensajes de texto de apoyo comunitario de Ready4K enviando STOP al 28922. Para obtener ayuda con Ready4K, envíe HELP en un mensaje de texto al 70138 o envíenos un correo electrónico a support@parentpowered.com

Ready4K Back to School Tips (click here)

Who do I contact with questions?

The best place is to always start with your child's teacher. They have close contact with your child and have a deep understanding of their program and can most quickly address any of your concerns.

The next step is to contact your 4K site director or elementary school principal. They have a wealth of knowledge and can answer questions about the many school-specific policies and procedures. Additionally, you can always contact the SP4K Program Supervisor to answer questions from an SP4K and Sun Prairie School district perspective. I am available to help you and your child make the most of this great school year and I help you navigate the school district in general. My contact information is at the bottom of this page.

Sun Prairie Early Learning Facebook page



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SPASD: STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

No student may be unlawfully discriminated against in any school programs, activities or in facilities usage because of the student's sex (gender identity, gender expressions, and non-conformity to gender role stereotypes), color, religion, profession, or demonstration of belief or non-belief, race, national origin (including limited English proficiency), ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, homelessness status, sexual orientation, age, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability. Harassment is a form of discrimination and shall not be tolerated in the District. It is the responsibility of administrators, staff members and all students to ensure that student discrimination or harassment does not occur.

[\(SPASD District Policy JB\)](#)

If a student or parent/guardian would prefer to have this information translated into Spanish, please contact us at 608-834-6620. Si un estudiante, padre ó guardian prefiere tener esta información traducida en Español, por favor contactenos en el 608-834-6620.

If a student or parent/guardian would prefer to have this information translated into Hmong, please contact us at 608-834-6630. Yog tus me nyuam lub xiv los yog niam thiab txiv/tus neeg muaj cai saib xyuas tus me nyuam xav tau qhov ntawv ntawm no ua lus Hmoob, thov hais rau peb paub rau ntawm 608-834-6630.



Elizabeth Knudten

Elizabeth is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

