

STARTING OFF RIGHT: NEW DEVELOPMENTAL KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

A student's entry into the formal schooling process is almost magical—being part of a class of peers, learning letters and numbers, sitting at desks, and following directions. It is important that this entry is successful. With the increasingly academic nature of kindergarten, however, some parents are finding that their children are not quite developmentally ready for the kindergarten program. This is why LAUSD designed a “Developmental Kindergarten” that meets the needs of these students.

Developmental Kindergarten is designed for students who are not developmentally ready to succeed in school and/or for parents who believe their child is not ready, socially or academically, for kindergarten even though their child is age-eligible. Developmental Kindergarten is available to children who turn five by December 2. It is desirable for, but not restricted to, children who turn five between July 1 and December 2 and are not quite ready for a regular kindergarten program.

There is a significant body of research that speaks to the importance of ensuring a child's readiness for entry into school. Jim Grant, Uphoff and Gilmore, and the National Center for Educational Statistics all cite numerous studies which support the advantages for delayed entry to kindergarten, especially for younger students. The research is quite clear that age is not the sole determinant of school success, but it is an important factor to consider. Some young children are very suitable for school entry and perform at very high levels. Developmental Kindergarten, although not right for every child, is an opportunity for success for those not quite ready for the pace and rigor of regular kindergarten

Using the State curriculum standards for kindergarten, our teachers use appropriate instructional strategies and teach at a pace to meet students' individual needs. If appropriate, students will be able to transition to a regular kindergarten class during the year, depending on space availability in the regular kindergarten classroom. At the end of the year, students will be individually placed in either regular kindergarten or in first grade, depending on their readiness and in accordance with Board Policy and Regulations.

Each class meets daily the same hours as the regular kindergarten class and is limited to twenty students. The number of classes and locations is determined by parent interest and student enrollment.

Parents interested in the program should complete a registration form available at all elementary school sites and on the District's website, www.losal.org. Registration forms are due by March 28, 2008 and may be returned to any elementary school or the District Office, 10293 Bloomfield St., Los Alamitos, CA 90720. For more information, see your principal or call the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at (562) 799-4700 ext. 80414.