



Indianapolis Public Schools

John T. Althardt, Director
The John Morton-Finney Center for Educational Services
120 E. Walnut Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204
TEL 317-226-4649
FAX 317-226-4498

Contact: John T. Althardt, 226-4649

Friday, January 4, 2013

Indianapolis Public Schools and Community Partners to Begin Enrolling Students in First Year of IPS Preschool January 19 and 23

In the inaugural year of its free, full-day preschool program, the Indianapolis Public Schools and six community partners will serve nearly half of the eligible four year-olds residing within the district. District officials predict interested families will quickly fill the 64 classrooms located in 34 sites serving just over 1,400 students during the 2013-2014 school year. The first opportunity to enroll students in the program will be January 19 and January 23 when the district hosts its Preschool Information and Application Fair in the cafeteria at Arsenal Technical High School, 1500 East Michigan Street. The fair will be open from 9 a.m. to noon on January 19 and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on January 23.

Discussions surrounding the school-based preschool initiative have been ongoing during the last several years. However, the lack of state or other funding sources made launching the program difficult. The district faced a similar challenge six years ago with full day kindergarten, deciding then to provide the program despite having no additional funding. The success of full day kindergarten and demand for full day preschool from the community led district leaders to commit to launching preschool in the next school year. Preschool will be offered through two general education stand-alone preschool centers, six general education community partner preschool sites, seven existing IPS schools and 13 special education preschool sites. Each classroom will hold a maximum of 20 students with a licensed teacher and classroom assistant teaching the same curriculum.

“We have taken the best practices in our community and in the state, visited sites in Lawrence and Warren townships and observed other preschool programs in the state. Through what we have learned and through our existing Reggio and Montessori programs, we will offer the best possible experience for our students,” said IPS Superintendent Dr. Eugene G. White.

IPS preschool is committed to Indiana’s Paths to Quality initiative, which provides a zero through four numerical rating of preschool providers across the state. IPS is dedicated to ensuring each preschool student receives the best, age-appropriate educational experience possible. All community partners will be required to maintain a level three or four Pathway to Quality status.

The United Way of Central Indiana has been integral in development of the IPS preschool program and calls the initiative “an excellent addition to the network of existing preschool providers. IPS adopting the Paths to Quality standards will raise the profile of the statewide effort to establish standards for excellence and provide parents with information they can use to choose a preschool provider.

-More-

Parents and guardians coming to one of the information and application fairs are asked to bring the following items with them if they wish to complete on-site registration:

- Government issued photo identification
- Proof of residency (must live within IPS district)
- Child's birth certificate
- Child's most recent immunization record

While there will be other opportunities to register for the IPS preschool program, the fair offers the most convenient method. School and community partner representatives will be on site to answer questions and to assist parents/guardians in selecting a site most suitable for their child.

Those who have questions regarding the IPS preschool program can call (317) 226-3912.

#