



Laguna Division of Early Childhood
PO Box 207 Laguna, NM 87026
(505) 552-6544



Welcome

Back To School

A New Year of Learning, Growth & Fun Awaits!

Director's Welcome Message

Dear DEC Families: Welcome back to the Laguna Division of Early Childhood, we are excited for our new and returning families to DEC. We are here to assist and support each family as we are beginning your educational journey for the 2026-2027 school year. We work as a team on building our children's foundational skills.

Division of Early Childhood Family Reminders

Building Routines and Connections & Welcome!

Reminder: Welcome to our Early Head Start/Head Start family!

Arrive a few minutes early to help your child transition smoothly.

Make sure emergency contact information is current.

Share any concerns, traditions, or family goals with staff.

Performance Standards Connection: Family engagement and partnership.

Attendance Matters

Reminder: Daily attendance helps children build routines, relationships, and learning skills.

Notify the program if your child will be absent.

Reach out if you need transportation or attendance support.

Performance Standards Connection: Attendance and family support.

Health and Wellness Check

Reminder: Keep your child home if they are sick or have a fever.

Ensure all required health forms and immunization records are submitted.

Inform staff about allergies, medications, or health concerns.

Performance Standards Connection: Health and safety practices.

Family Communication

Reminder: Check backpacks, folders, texts, or communication apps daily.

Contact your teacher with questions or updates.

We value your voice and partnership.

Performance Standards Connection: Parent-family-community engagement.





Director's Welcome Message Continued...



Cultural Identity and Belonging

Reminder: Our program celebrates Tribal culture, language, and traditions.

Share songs, stories, family history, or cultural practices that are meaningful to your child.

Performance Standards Connection: Culturally and linguistically responsive services.

Strengthening Learning and Family Partnerships

Learning Through Play Reminder: Children learn through play, exploration, and relationships.

Ask your child about their favorite classroom activities.

Read, talk, sing, and play together each day.

Performance Standards Connection: School readiness and child development.

Nutrition and Healthy Habits

Reminder: Help your child get adequate sleep and eat healthy meals.

Share any dietary needs with program staff.

Encourage handwashing and healthy routines at home.

Performance Standards Connection: Child health and wellness.



Safety First

Reminder: Review drop-off and pick-up procedures.

Ensure authorized pick-up contacts are up to date.

Use appropriate car seats and safety restraints.

Performance Standards Connection: Child safety requirements.

Family Goal Setting

Reminder: Families are partners in children's success.

Think about goals you would like to work on this year for your child and family.

Schedule time to connect with your Family Advocate or teacher.

Performance Standards Connection: Family partnership process.

Celebrating Success

Reminder: Congratulations on completing the beginning of the school year at DEC!

Thank you for partnering with us to support your child's growth, culture, and learning.

We look forward to a successful school year together.

Performance Standards Connection: Ongoing family engagement and child outcomes.

"Together we honor our children, families, culture, and community. Thank you for partnering with us to create a strong foundation for lifelong learning and success."

Carla A. Spaniel

Dr. Carla A. Spaniel, Director
Division of Early Childhood

Important Dates

- 9/4 Staff Professional Development *No School
- 9/7 Labor Day Holiday *No School
- 9/8 Encinal Feast Day *No School
- 9/11 Grandparents Breakfast Event
- 9/18 Laguna Feast Parade *Half Day
- 9/25 Paguate Feast Day *No School

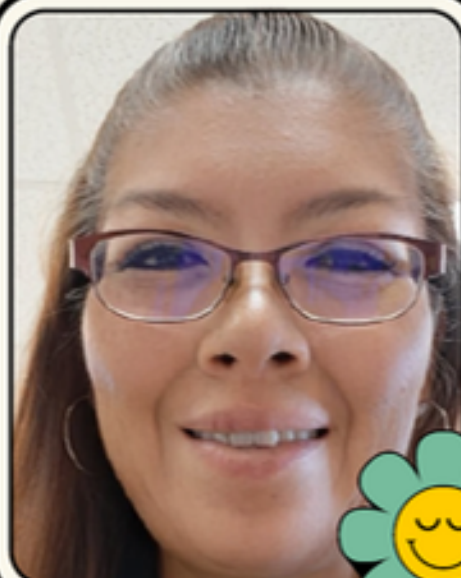


Meet the TEACHER

◆ Teacher Candice ◆

About Me

Welcome to Turquoise Springs!
I'm Mrs. Candice Lucero,
and I'm excited to be back with
LDoE once again. I love
building a kind classroom
where students feel
confident, curious,
ready to learn and play.



Education & Experience

B.A. in Multicultural Education Early
Childhood

18+ years in the
education field

◆ Favorites ◆

Colors: Purple, Yellow

Food: Steaks, wings

Season: Fall

Hobby: beading, plastic
canvas crafts

Animal: Elephants

Contact Info

Phone:
5055526544

Email:
c.lucero@lagunaed.net

We are here Monday-Friday 7:45am-2:45pm!



Hello, My name is:

Margaret Mascarenaz, Disabilities Coordinator

OFFICE: 505-552-6544 EXT, 5104

EMAIL: MMASCARENAZ@LAGUNAED.NET



A few facts about ME!

As a child and teenager, I lived in Grants and attended Grants Municipal Schools ,as well as St. Joseph School. I graduated from Grants High School. I graduated from the University of New Mexico.

Years Teaching: I have close to 50 years of teaching experience in public and private education, and my favorite in Head Start programs in Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico. I have experience as a Special Education teacher/coordinator working with all ages of children/students from infants to high school. My experience in Head Start/Early Head Start has been in various other roles in the Head Start programs in the three states listed above.

Years at DEC: I have had the honor of working at DEC over 20 years. Thank you.

More about me:

- I am a proud and grateful mother and grandmother to one son and two daughters and to two wonderful grandchildren!
- Dancing and enjoying listening to all kinds of music are a couple of my favorite pastimes.
- I enjoy Herbal teas and coffee.
- One favorite food I enjoy, is chicken enchiladas . “Christmas (red & green)“, please!

Welcome to DEC
Program Year 2026-2027!



Welcome to DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD (DEC)!. As the Disabilities Coordinator, it is my goal to provide developmental support services in an environment where each child is nurtured, respected and valued, along with their families.

My role here at DEC is to work collaboratively with educational partners that provide services for children that may require support to reach developmental goals for their age in order to achieve their fullest learning potential.

I want to honor and respect the fact that parents/families are their child's/children's first and best teacher and assure families that I work cooperatively with parents/families at all times.

If families have any concerns with their child's development, please let the classroom teachers know and/or you may reach out to me at contact information.



“
Family: where life
begins and love
never ends.”

PARAJE ROOM

Leona "Faye" Peacock and Marissa Analla

l.peacock@lagunaed.net

m.analla@lagunaed.net

505-552-6544 Ext. 5114

GREETINGS FROM THE PARAJE ROOM

Hello Families

Wow, how time flies. Parent's, we are already back in school and ready for a new school year. We are now in our third week of school and we are off to a great start. Hurray! Your child may still be adjusting to their new classroom, but we are having a great time meeting new teachers and new friends. We are honored to be part of your child's educational journey as their preschool teachers. We would like for you all to enjoy this new school year and to continue to stay positive in your child's everyday learning. There are so many opportunities for families to become involved in what's happening in your child's classroom. There are so many different ways families can be part of these learning experiences. We hope that you will participate whenever possible and help to build the important connection between home and school.

As we begin a new school year 2026-27 lets all focus on making your child's education a fun and safe place to be.

For the Month of September Paraje Room will focus on Culture "Feast Days, Villages, Food we prepare for the Feast Days," Follow the leader", Harvesting foods we plant. "Balls Study"



Meet the Teacher

Dear Students and Families,
Welcome to a new school year.
My name is Sandra Lewis,
and I am delighted to be your
child's teacher this year.
Teaching in New York
Classroom for ages ranging
from from 17 months to 27
months.



A Few Facts About Me

Favorite NFL Team: Denver Broncos

Favorite food: Sea food and Asian Food

Favorite Hobby: Spending time with my two grand daughters.

I was married to my late husband for 31 years with four children, two granddaughters and another grandchild on the way.

Contact Information:

Sandra Lewis



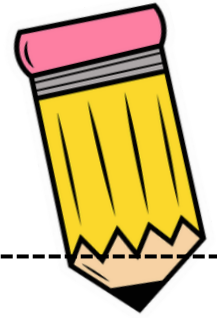
s.lewis@lagunaed.net

(505) 552-6544 ext. 5107

I reside in the Pueblo of Acoma. I have been teaching in the Laguna Early Head Start for eight years. During my first three years at Early Head Start I was a home visitor with the Home Based Program teaching zero to three years old. All together I have worked in the school system at various grade levels from PreK to 12th grade for more than twenty years. Finding my passion to work with Infants and Toddlers.

SEAMA CLASSROOM

Caundice Deutsawe and Yvonne Francis
c.deutsawe@lagunaed.net y.francis@lagunaed.net
505-552-6544 Ext. 5112



GREETINGS FAMILIES

I hope your children are getting back to the school routine of waking up and getting on the bus. For the first few weeks, the Seama classroom continues to learn the classroom routines. We are working on cleaning up after ourselves, using our language skills to communicate, and taking turns.

We completed our first nutrition activity, chocolate banana smoothie. During our nutrition activities children learn kitchen safety, increase problem solving, fine motor and self-help skills. Such as washing hands before starting, washing and preparing food used, if needed, that adults handle sharp objects, or other things that may cause them harm. Children enjoyed their smoothie at the end. September nutrition activity is Watermelon Stars and Blueberries.

In September, we will continue on building relationships, children with their peers and children with teachers. We will continue to learn strategies on making and keep friends. Building relationships is ongoing as our classroom continues to grow as well as meeting other staff that are in the school community.

We will continue to work on following our classroom routine and classroom rules to assist for a fun and safe learning environment.

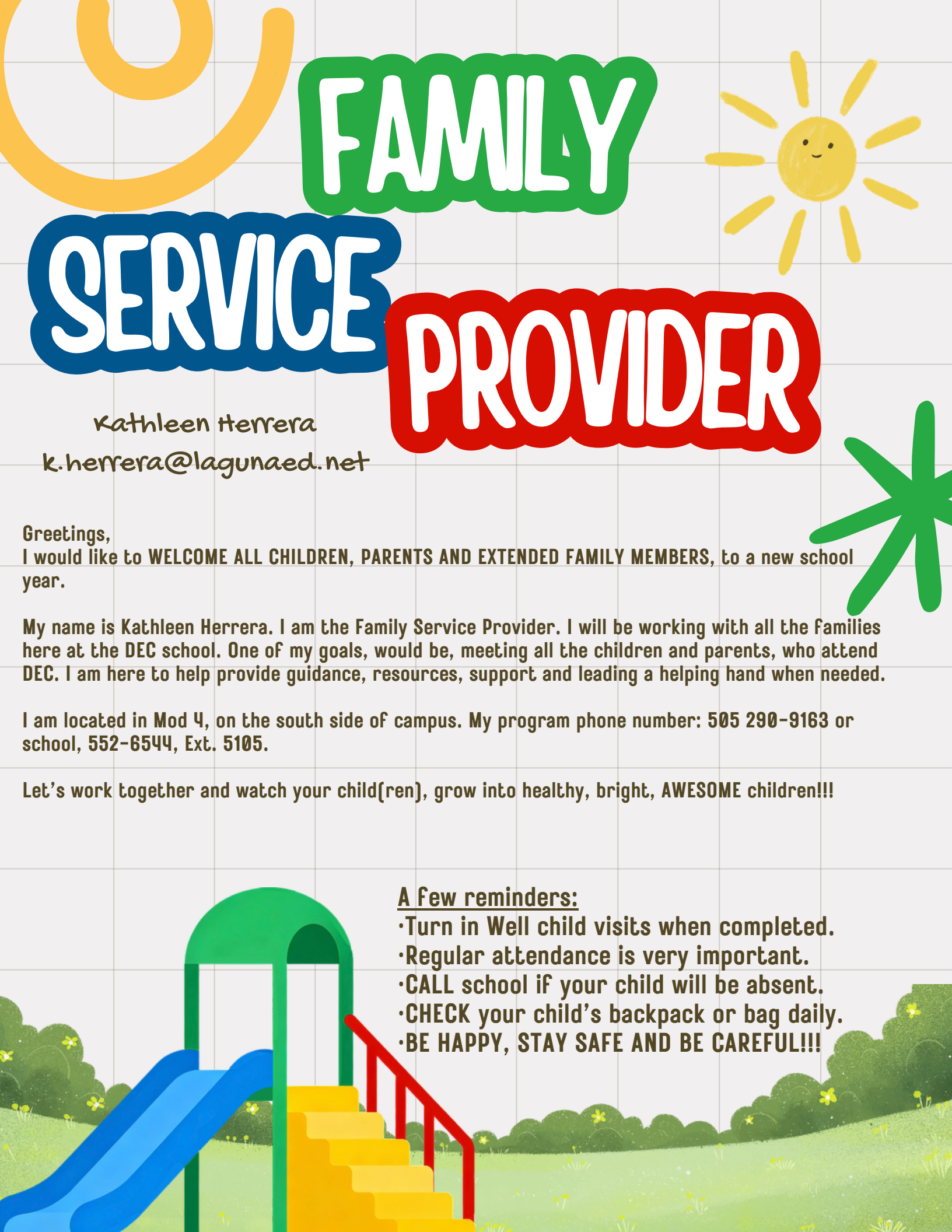
Reminder that if your child is not feeling well, please keep them home. We would like your support in reminding children to cover their mouths when they sneeze and cough. Washing hands after blowing their nose and often as to not spread germs. Make sure to call the school if your child will be absent.

Our first achievement will go out to all the families. It can be difficult to get your children up and ready for school, you are all doing great! Let's keep it going! :0)

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact the teachers.

EVENTS

9/4 NO SCHOOL Professional Development for Staff
9/7 No School Holiday
9/8 NO SCHOOL Culture Day-Encinal Feast
9/13 Grandparents Day
9/18 ½ day Early Release- Laguna Feast Parade Day
9/19 Laguna Feast
9/25 NO SCHOOL Culture Day -Paguete Feast



FAMILY SERVICE PROVIDER

Kathleen Herrera

k.herrera@lagunaed.net

Greetings,

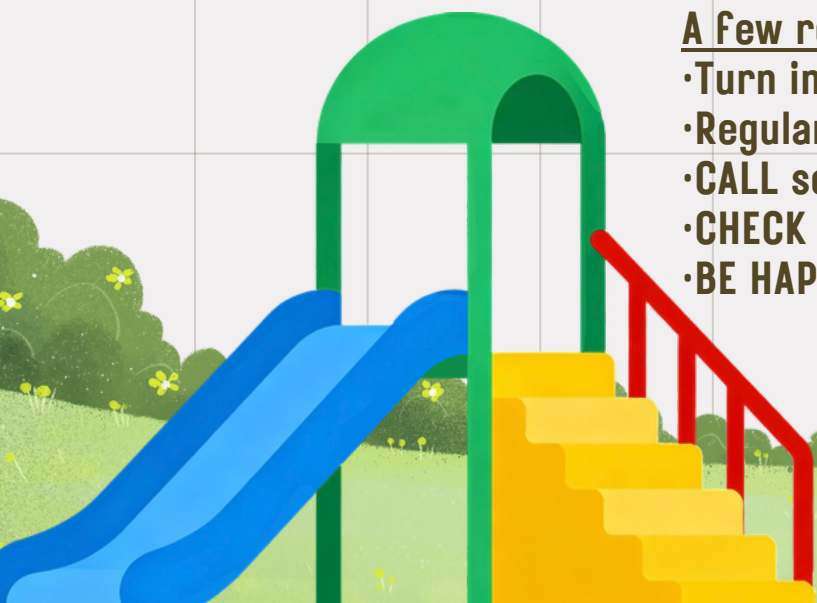
I would like to **WELCOME ALL CHILDREN, PARENTS AND EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBERS**, to a new school year.

My name is Kathleen Herrera. I am the Family Service Provider. I will be working with all the families here at the DEC school. One of my goals, would be, meeting all the children and parents, who attend DEC. I am here to help provide guidance, resources, support and leading a helping hand when needed.

I am located in Mod 4, on the south side of campus. My program phone number: 505 290-9163 or school, 552-6544, Ext. 5105.

Let's work together and watch your child(ren), grow into healthy, bright, **AWESOME** children!!!

A few reminders:

- Turn in Well child visits when completed.
 - Regular attendance is very important.
 - CALL school if your child will be absent.
 - CHECK your child's backpack or bag daily.
 - BE HAPPY, STAY SAFE AND BE CAREFUL!!!
- 

The Baby Times

SUNNYSIDE CLASSROOM

Andrea Lucario a.lucario@lagunaed.net
Makayla Sarracino m.sarracino@lagunaed.net
(505)552-6544 EXT 5201

We made it through the month of August. The children are becoming more comfortable with their classmates. As we are beginning the school year with new children they are learning and engaging fast with the other teachers. Some of the children are still shy but they are opening up on their own as well.

For Social-Emotional: Getting used to meeting new staff members. Getting to meet more new classmates

Cultural lifeways: We are in the month of Village Feast Days

Highlight student achievements/milestones accomplished

- ~K.C- Slowly adjusting to the classroom routines
- ~E.H- Walking along the furniture also playing with the buckles from high chair
- ~W.K- Becoming more aware of his classmates and other children
- ~R.L- Walking along furniture and playing with classmates
- ~J.P- Slowly getting comfortable with teachers and peers
- ~K.S- She is talking among peers and got classroom routines down
- ~Z.W- Beginning to hold himself up with little support

Birthdays – K.S 9/28

Reminders to parents: Check folders for important information. Please read to your child

**Parent tip(s): Be patient and understanding, during separation.
Offer extra cuddles, reassurance, and saying good-bye.**

Parent recognition: Thank you to our parents for bringing their children to school



*Andrea & Makayla are thrilled to announce
that their class is grown to eight feet this year!*



WELCOME TO CHINATOWN CLASSROOM!

(505)552-6544 Ext 5200

Evelyn Garcia - e.garcia@lagunaed.net

Carol Pedro - c.pedro@lagunaed.net

As we begin a new school year, Mrs. Pedro and I, teacher Evelyn, would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our children and families. We are excited to have you as part of our Chinatown Classroom community and look forward to building meaningful relationships with each of you.

In Chinatown, we believe every child is unique and capable of learning, growing, and achieving great things. Our program provides a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment where children can explore, play, build friendships, and develop important skills that support their future success.

We also recognize that families are a child's first and most important teachers. Your involvement, experiences, culture, and traditions help create a strong foundation for your child's growth and learning. We value the partnership between home and school and look forward to working together throughout the year.

The beginning of a school year brings many exciting opportunities, as well as new routines and experiences. It is normal for children and families to feel a range of emotions during this transition. We are committed to making every child feel welcomed, comfortable, and supported as they become familiar with their new learning environment and learn our classroom routines.

Throughout the year, families will have opportunities to participate in classroom activities, family engagement events, parent meetings, workshops, and celebrations. We encourage you to stay connected, share your ideas, and take an active role in your child's educational journey.

Communication is an important part of our partnership. We welcome your questions, concerns, and feedback. Together, we can create positive learning experiences that help your child thrive.

Thank you for trusting us with your child's care and education. We are honored to be part of your family's journey and look forward to a wonderful year filled with learning, laughter, discovery, and growth.

Welcome to our Chinatown Classroom family. We are excited to learn, grow, and celebrate with you this year!



CHINATOWN CLASSROOM CONTINUED...

August Reflection

Self-Identity & Kinship

During the month of August, our children explored the theme **Self-Identity & Kinship**, building a deeper understanding of who they are, where they belong, and the important relationships that connect them to family, community, and culture. Through meaningful interactions, hands-on experiences, stories, songs, photographs, and daily routines, children strengthened their sense of self while learning about the unique identities and experiences of others.

Aligned with the **HSELOF Domains**, children demonstrated growing self-awareness by recognizing themselves in mirrors and photographs, identifying personal characteristics, and expressing their preferences, emotions, and interests. Children also learned songs and looked at books that honored home languages and cultural traditions. They explored family photographs, cultural materials, and dramatic play experiences that reflected their everyday lives. These experiences helped children make meaningful connections between home, school, and community.

Our children showed curiosity and enthusiasm as they explored areas related to self, family, and culture. They demonstrated creativity; persistence and increasing independence; and, strengthened their fine- and gross-motor skills through various play and classroom activities, dances, art, and sensory exploration. And, they participated in songs and activities that encouraged coordination, self-expression, and an appreciation for cultural traditions through movement and play.

Thank You to Our Families

We give our sincere appreciation to all parents and family members who participated in our **take-home activities** throughout the month. Your contributions of family photographs, stories, traditions, languages, and shared experiences enriched our learning environment and helped children make meaningful connections between home and school. We got chills seeing the old Paraje Trading Post! Your involvement strengthened each child's sense of identity, belonging, and cultural awareness. Thank you for partnering with us and for helping create a classroom community that celebrates every child and family.

In September, we plan on extending our learning of self-identity and kinship by exploring our Cultural Feast Days. Our children will have opportunities to actively engage in what makes our village feast special. Parents and families have an important role in sharing memories of their childhood experiences. Remember seeing people camping nearby or staying until the sun went down and seeing all the lights from the carnival and food stands? We hope to make this month's cultural lifeway memorable and fun for all: children and their families!

Upcoming Reminders

- Watch for information about parent meetings and family events.
- Complete and return any remaining enrollment forms.
- Update staff with any changes to contact information.
- Follow classroom communications for important announcements and activities.

**Together, we can make this a successful and memorable
year for every child and family.**

MEET THE TEACHER



Marilou Arkie-m.arkie@lagunaed.net
(505)552-6544 Ext 5202



ABOUT ME

Hello my name is Marilou Arkie and I am from the village of Paraje. I currently reside in the village of Laguna with my husband, kids and pets. I enjoy spending time with my family as well as doing crafts. I have been with DEC for 6 yrs. I look forward to being able to work with your child in the Turquoise Springs classroom. Let's have a great year.



The first month in the classroom will consist of getting used to being in school and getting to know our classroom routine.

Our curriculum for the first month will be Self Identity and Kinships.

Goals for the year: Forming positive relationships with peers and adults. Developing Gross, Fine motor and language skills.

Note to the parent: Please send your child with an extra set of clothes, a blanket for nap time and a sippy or water bottle. Please remember to check your child's folder on a daily basis. I look forward to a wonderful school year.

MY FAVORITES

Food: I like Asian, Italian cuisine

Drink: I like COKE Zero and iced/hot coffee.

Snack: It just depends on my moods at the time.

But I love snacks

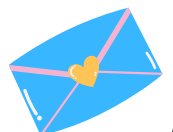
Candy: Dark chocolate

Store: Target, Marshalls, Ross

Color: Purple, Blue (Dodger)

Sports: Love Baseball, LA Dodgers and any Team my son plays on. (Paraje Grizzlies)

Season: Fall





Health Aide

Angelica Baca-a.baca@lagunaed.net
(505)552-6544 Ext 5103



Greetings families, I hope you are all doing well and I hope everyone has had a great summer so far! My name is Angelica, I am the Health Aide here at DEC. I am half Native American and half Spanish, and I am from the village of Pagate. I have been in the medical field for ten years. I look forward to getting to know all of you and your children in the new school year. Welcome back to the returning children! I wish everyone a blessed school year! As always, please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns.

Fun Facts About Me:

LAKERS

Birth month: July

Children: One beautiful and amazing daughter, and another on the way



Favorite season: Fall

Sports teams: Lakers, Yankees, and Raiders

Music: I love all kinds of music

Pets: I have two dogs (Loki and Remy)

Drinks: I love Dutch Bros, Dr. Pepper, Boba tea, and Chai

Hobbies: I love to cook and bake, taking long drives, camping, fishing



PARENT REMINDERS



Friendly reminder: If your child is missing any health documents (Well child, updated immunizations, dental exams, updated special care plans) please send them in as soon as possible. Thank you!



JEAN PAQUIN

EDUCATIONAL MANAGER



j.paquin@lagunaed.net

(505)552-6544 Ext. 5001

Program Cell: 505-290-9240

Gu'waa'zee sa'hoo'bah

I am Jean Paquin, the Educational Manager for the Division of Early Childhood (DEC). Let me tell you a little about myself. My clans are big Badger and little Turkey. I am a proud Laguna tribal member from the Village of Old Laguna. My education is, Master of Arts Degree in Family and Child Studies, with a concentration in Early Childhood Studies. In addition, I have a Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Multicultural Education.

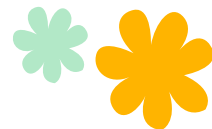
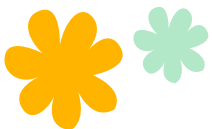
I am excited to see all the children here at the DEC Program. I want to extend a special thank you, to families, for allowing your (child)ren to attend our school! Best wishes to all families for a smooth and happy start to this new school year! I look forward to meeting you and developing an ongoing collaboration to ensure an engaging, happy, and successful school year for your child(ren). Please feel free to contact me via email or telephone, if you have any questions.

Da'waa'ee,



EXPLORE
OUR
PROGRAM





ERSEA COORDINATOR CHILD CARE MANAGER

PATRICIA CHARLIE

p.charlie@lagunaed.net

505-552-6544 Ext. 5004



Welcome back families

Welcome back families . . . where did the summer go? I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer. I would like to welcome returning and new children to our program. My name is Patricia Charlie and I am the ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance) Coordinator and Child Care Manager. I have been working for Laguna Division of Early Childhood for approximately 12 years, spent 1 ½ years at Isleta Head Start as a data analyst. I do have a BA degree from New Mexico Highlands University, Business Management major, finance concentration. I currently reside in the village of Pagate. I am a grandmother who will try and attend a concert or two, visit the local casino, attend ALL my grandchildren's events and hang out with my mother or my girlfriends. My monthly newsletter reports will include reminders for parents/guardians, attendance percentages for each classroom, child care updates and overall classroom enrollment for DEC.

Reminders for parents/guardians

- If your child/children are absent from school, please remember to call the front office and "press option 1 for attendance"
- If we do not receive a call from parent regarding absence, I will call parent/guardian to check in on the child/children. (DEC Parent handbook – page 21)
- Contact list – the person's listed on the contact list are the persons who can check a child out of school/child care or sign the child off the bus. This list can be updated at any time. The annual application update form is available from the program assistant or the child's classroom.
- Applications are being accepted for Preschool Headstart (3 years – 5 years) and Early Headstart (birth to 3 years)

Enrollment numbers:

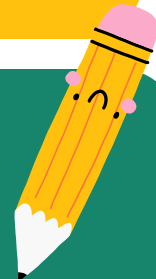
Preschool Headstart – 53 children enrolled

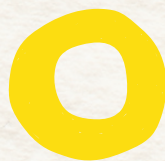
Early Headstart – 31 center based enrolled

1 home based enrolled

I do have a wait list for children to be accepted for child care. I will update parents who are on the wait list.

I wish ALL families an enjoyable school year . . .





Custodian's **WELCOME**



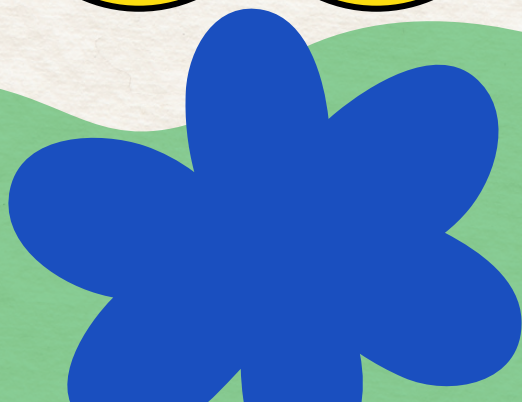
Hello Everyone,

My name is Yolanda Concho, and I am from Laguna Pueblo. I have been a custodian at DEC for almost three years, and I truly enjoy being here and working around the children.

My coworker, Carol D., and I do our best every day to keep our facility clean, safe, and sanitized for the children, families and staff. We take great pride in providing a healthy environment where everyone can learn and grow.

I hope you all had a wonderful summer. As the colder weather begins to approach, please help us keep everyone healthy by keeping your child home if they are feeling sick. Ms. Day and I work hard to sanitize and disinfect the facility daily to help prevent the spread of germs.

Thank you for trusting us and for sending your children to DEC. Together, let's make this a successful and enjoyable year for our children, families and staff.



Program Assistant

Iris Gallegos
i.gallegos@lagunaed.net
(505) 552-6544 Ext. 5100



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year. I hope everyone had a fulfilled summer, is well rested and ready for a year full of learning, growth and fun.

My name is Iris Gallegos. My clans are big parrot and little Turkey. I am a Laguna Tribal member from the village of Seama where I have been a life-long resident and where I reside with my husband of 36 years. I have four sons and am the proud grandmother of 13 grandchildren all of whom I love very much. I like the mountains, camping, hunting and fishing. I like to listen to all types of music and watch movies when I can. I assist my husband and oldest son coach youth sports for the children of the community and surrounding communities. I have been a lifetime fan of the Dallas Cowboys, LA Lakers, NY Yankees, Texas Longhorns, NMSU Aggies and the Laguna Acoma Hawks. I like most foods with sweet/indian tea or Dr. Pepper. I like to snack on popcorn, beef jerky and pinons. My favorite colors are navy blue, black and silver/gray. And I like the winter especially when it snows knee deep and Christmas to see all the lights.

Reminders:

- Adhere to the 5 MPH school speed zone
- Practice pedestrian safety by holding your child's hand from the parking lot to their classroom and vice-versa
- All children must be transported in a car seat and properly restrained in the vehicle
- Do not leave your vehicle running unattended
- Do not leave children unattended in the vehicle
- Stop for buses to pass while in the parking area
- No outside food or drink. Thank you for keeping children safe from allergens.
- Call the school if your child will be absent from school

We welcome and encourage all parents & families to be a volunteer. There is a wide variety of ways you can volunteer and the school can accumulate In-Kind with the time you give. Contact us for more information.

I would like to thank all the parents & families for choosing the Laguna Division of Early Childhood for your child's foundational steps in their educational journey. I look forward to assisting you while your child is enrolled here at DEC. Please feel free to contact me via phone, email or come by the front office in person.

**MAY YOU ALL BE RICHLY BLESSED.
HAVE A WONDERFUL SCHOOL YEAR !**



It's Grandparents Day at DEC!

THE LAGUNA DIVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
INVITES OUR GRANDPARENTS TO ENJOY
BREAKFAST WITH YOUR GRANDCHILD

Grandparents
may eat with your
grandchildren in
their classroom (if
room permits) or in
the PRC

Serving from the PRC on
Friday, September 11, 2026
at 8:00 am

Grandparents,
If you have
multiple
grandchildren,
please eat with
them in the
PRC

All children will be served in their classrooms