

Albany Children's Center
720 Jackson Street, Albany
510-559-6590

Anna Mansker, Director
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510-559-6592

WELCOME TO A NEW SCHOOL YEAR!

Welcome to Albany Children's Center! We are excited to start the 2017-2018 school year with your child and you! The Transitional Kindergarten classrooms are located on a wonderful, small campus on the side of Albany Hill. We share the Children's Center Campus with four preschool classrooms; this supports the developmental nature of the TK program. You are welcome to visit the campus with your child during the summer (just check in with Felicia at the front desk). You are also invited to our TK playdates and Orientation. These playdates are a great aid in supporting your child's smooth transition to TK this year:

Play dates outside on the yard

Tuesday, August 22, 2017 @ 9:30am -10:30am

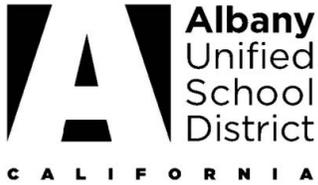
Friday, August 25, 2017 @ 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Parents (even if your child is unavailable for the playdate beforehand) are encouraged to come to the Orientation, which will happen immediately after the second playdate, for a few beginning-of-the-year announcements and to find out what classroom your child will be in for the school year.

Orientation

Friday, August 25th, 2017 @ 2:00pm – 2:30pm

We, the TK teaching team, are very collaborative and communicative with each other about students and our program, and are highly appreciative of how much parents are committed to their children having rewarding, enriching educational experiences. We have found that, once the school year begins in earnest, both parents and children are happy with their classroom placement; thus, we do not consider parental input in classroom placement.



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Beginning of the School Year

Early Bird / Late Bird Assignment

Most, if not all, families have received a letter from the district containing an Early Bird / Late Bird assignment. If the district's assignment is in fact the placement that you want, we will try to honor that when we make classes. If the district's assignment is not what you want, do not worry: we will be in contact with parents during the first week of school about your Early Bird and Late Bird preferences. Our goal is to create equitable learning environments for all children during the Early Bird / Late Bird hours; thus, teachers will have discretion to make placements considering factors such as gender balance, group size, and child dynamics, and will be in touch if the ultimate placement is different than what the district has assigned.

Early Bird/ Late Bird Assignments will be distributed by the end of the first week of school.

First Week of School – Everyone Early Bird (8:30am – 1:00pm)

The first day of school is **Monday, August 28, 2017**.

During the first week of school, all students are Early Birds: the school day begins at 8:30am and ends at 1:00pm.

Supporting Your Child's Transition to TK

To begin school for the first time, or start a new school year at a new place, can be a challenging experience for children. We encourage all families to come to a summer playdate to help your child's transition to their new school environment. Also, creating a special "Good-Bye" routine can be very effective. If you know, or believe, that your child will find the transition into the classroom difficult, please talk to a TK teacher during the play dates, orientation, or over email. Parents are welcome to support their child's transition into the classroom by playing with them at the beginning of the day during the first week, and gradually spending less time in the classroom. Sometimes, a parent's prolonged presence in the classroom can make a child's transition more challenging. Please keep that in mind, and stay in communication with your child's classroom teacher about making the transition as smooth as possible for your child.

Early Bird / Late Bird Schedule – Begins Second Week of School

Early Bird / Late Bird schedule will begin **Tuesday, September 5**. If you are an Early Bird family, your child's school day is 8:30 am - 1:00pm, the same as the first week of school. If you are a Late Bird family, your child's school day will 9:30am – 2:00pm.

Logistics

Drop Off and Pick Up

We encourage families to arrive early to school, so that students' days can begin on time. Please arrive early to pick up as well to ensure families are present when students are released from their classrooms. Please keep in mind, there is NO SUPERVISION for your child before (or after) school hours. Likewise, please contact Felicia in the front office at (510) 559 – 6592 if you will be late to pick up your child, and try to be less than 10 minutes late. Some children can become distressed if their parent does not pick them up on time.

If you drive your child to school, please remember that the front of the school can get very congested. Some tips to make this a SAFE, and less stressful, experience include:

- Parking allowed on Cerrito Street, behind the school, as well as in front.
- Never attempt a U TURN on Jackson Street.
- Please be considerate of our neighbors' driveways and not block them while parking. We are a neighborhood school, and wish to remain in good relations with neighbors.

Medication

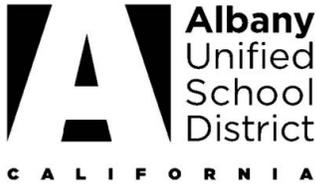
Students are not allowed to keep medication of any kind in their backpacks (including over-the-counter medication). **If a student must take medication during school, a Medication Form must be filled out, signed by the student's doctor and put on file in the office.** Medicines remaining in the office after the last day of school will be thrown away.

School Safety

Bicycles, scooters and skateboards must be walked at all times when on the school campus and should only be ridden once they leave school.

Extra Clothes and Lost and Found

Accidents do happen and children get dirty having fun and playing at school! Please bring an extra set of clothes; we will store the clothes in your child's cubby. Also, **please have your child practice changing their own clothing.**



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Please **label every item**, such as clothing or lunch boxes, your child brings to school. Unlabeled items can be retrieved from the Lost and Found purple basket in the main hallway. Unclaimed items are donated to charities at the end of each trimester.

Back-to-School Night

Yearly, we have a Back-to-School-Night, usually the same day as the district-wide Back-to-School-Night but at an earlier hour. The date and time is still to be determined.

School Success

Attendance

Research shows that **regular, timely, attendance is vital to your child's success in school**. Children who are tardy or absent miss important learning time; children who begin to internalize the routine of school will transition better into Kindergarten and the more structured school routines of elementary school after their TK year.

If your child is absent, please email your teacher and/or call the office at 559-6590 and leave a message on the answering machine day or night. Or you may provide a note to the office when they return. You must give a reason for the absence. Students who are more than 10 minutes tardy must check in at the front office.

Lunch and Snack

Eating nutritiously during the school day is very important for a child's engagement with school activities. We eat twice during the day: a snack time (between 9:45 and 10:30, depending on the day) and a lunch at 11:30. Students are welcome to bring their own snacks and lunch daily. We collect parent donations for snacks. Hot Lunch is served daily for families who sign up for this service. Families who may qualify for Free or Reduced lunch are highly encouraged to apply. Please see the following page about **how to sign up** for lunch and Free/Reduced lunch.

On behalf of the entire staff and teachers at Albany Children's Center, we look forward to serving you and your children this coming school year!

Sincerely,
The Transitional Kindergarten Team
(Kristina Finnegan, and Tomas Gold)

School Supplies List

*** *A Note About School Supplies:* All supplies listed below are specific items that may be *donated* if you so choose. Donations can be dropped off with Felicia at the front desk or with a TK Teacher. Choosing to donate or not to donate in no way impacts the services your child will receive at ACC and in TK ***

Suggested Donations per student

- Band-Aids: 1 Box
- Disinfectant wipes (Bleach-Free, as per new regulations; not baby wipes): 1 container
- Kleenex: 1 Box
- Elmer's Glue Sticks
- Crayola Color Pencils
- Crayola Crayons
- **Nut-Free**, low in sugar, non-perishable snacks (such as graham crackers, goldfish, cereal (low sugar), pretzels, dried fruit, triscuits, wheat thins)
- Hand Sanitizer: 1 Bottle

Thank you for all donations!

School Lunch Sign-Up

School lunch at ACC is a debit system: Families make an account for their children, put money into the account, and every time your child eats lunch, money is deducted from the account. A full price meal, including milk, is **\$4.00**.

More information about school lunch (including the menus for Albany Children's Center) can be found at <http://ausdschoolfoodproject.org/>

(This website can also be accessed through the district website, www.ausdk12.org . on the district website, go to "Departments" at the top right, then go to "Food Services" on the drop-down menu)

To Create a Debit Account for your child to have full-cost school lunch, please go to <https://www.myschoolbucks.com/> and "Sign Up Today" and follow through the steps.

Free/Reduced Lunch Application

To Apply for Free/Reduced lunch, first go to <http://ausdschoolfoodproject.org/> Then click on the "Meal Applications" link, illustrated below. Then click the "EZ Meal App" button, "click on "Apply Today" and follow instructions. If you qualify for Reduced lunch cost, you will still need to set up a My School Bucks account so that the reduced cost can be debited. For this, follow instructions above.

