

For immediate release

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**COUNTDOWN: 53 DAYS TIL THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!  
ALLENTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT TO HOLD KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION DAYS**

(Allentown, PA, July 13, 2006) –Allentown School District is holding the last Kindergarten Sign-Up Days to register all new Kindergartners at one location—Lincoln Early Childhood Center—July 26 and 27. Registration will be from 10 am-3 pm and from 5-8 pm both days.

“A large number of parents and guardians do not realize that students must be registered for kindergarten BEFORE that very special first day of school,” says Barbara Malcolm of School Health Services. “We do not want to see children lacking documented health records being turned away from the classroom.” ASD anticipates almost 1,200 five-year-olds will attend ASD kindergarten this year. So far, almost half have registered.

Elementary students are to report for the first day of class on September 5, 2006. “If a student cannot make registration at Lincoln on July 26 or 27, we encourage parents to pick up enrollment packets at any ASD school between now and the start,” says Malcolm.

Children who will be five years old on or before September 30, 2006 and live within the Allentown School District are eligible to be registered. Parents are asked to bring with them their child’s immunization records, proof of birth, and proof of residence within the District. Parents are also required to bring their child to the registration.

Lincoln Early Childhood Center is located at 1402 Walnut Street. The school’s main office line is 484-765-4801.

### **Required Information**

- Proof of Immunization: Shot records
- Proof of Birth: birth certificate, baptismal certificate, passport, green card, hospital birth record, notarized statement with birth date
- Proof of Residence: utility bill or service agreement for gas/oil, electric, phone, cable TV or notarized statement from parents indicating address of residence.

### **Kindergarten Key to Educational Success**

“Kindergarten lays the foundation for a child’s entire education,” says Jeffrey Fries, Principal at Midway Manor Early Childhood Center. “By the end of kindergarten, students will have a basic knowledge of letters, sounds, colors, shapes, counting, identifying numbers and writing. In addition, students will develop problem-solving skills. The sooner that children are introduced to our academic standards, the more solid a foundation they will build.”

“Students who come from homes where English is a second language may be at a disadvantage by not attending kindergarten,” remarks Elsie Martinez-Pletz, Principal at Lincoln Early Childhood Center. “The earlier that they are exposed to English in an educational setting, the earlier they will be prepared to grasp the concepts of reading, language and math comprehension.”

Consider these additional facts, provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education ([www.pde.pa.state.us](http://www.pde.pa.state.us)):

- Pennsylvania is one of several states not requiring children to attend kindergarten; attendance in school is not required until the age of eight..
- More than half of Pennsylvania’s children attended full-day kindergarten in 2005-2006, a major step forward. Most ASD students attend half days, but there are a few classes in the District that experience full day due to EAP grant funding.
- Recent studies, including the Abecedarian Project, have proven that full-day kindergarten can close the achievement gaps for children of high-risk backgrounds. ([www.fpg.unc.edu/~abc/](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~abc/))
- The Chicago Child-Parent Center Study has shown that every \$1.00 invested in early childhood education generates \$7.00 in benefits. ([www.waisman.wisc.edu/cls/index.htmlx](http://www.waisman.wisc.edu/cls/index.htmlx))

### **Kindergarten Shapes Children’s Physical and Social Development**

“Kindergarten allows us the opportunity to see a child’s development first hand,” continues Barbara Malcolm, Chairperson of Health Services for the District. “Children can receive free immunizations in August at various locations provided by the Allentown Health Bureau. They also need physicals and

vision tests. With these tests completed, we are able to identify potential health problems that could prevent children from learning, such as a lazy eye or difficulty in hearing. We are able to treat such problems early on, so that students can overcome these potential learning impediments. Once a child feels that he or she has fallen behind their classmates, no matter the age, they become uncomfortable trying to master leaning skills.”

Malcolm also stresses the importance of early education in social development. “By going to kindergarten, children learn socialization skills within an educational setting, such as taking turns and raising your hand, as well as learning the building blocks in literacy.”

Serving approximately 18,100 students in 22 early childhood, elementary, middle and high schools located throughout the City of Allentown, PA, Allentown School District is the fourth largest school district out of 501 Commonwealth districts. The District’s mission is to provide safe and rigorous educational experiences that motivate all students to excel in learning and life. Allentown School District employs approximately 1,218 teachers and 2,000 employees overall. [www.allentownsd.org](http://www.allentownsd.org) 484-765-4000.

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