

Mary A. Schaubland
Pre-School Supervisor

PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN MANZANAR

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to A. Nichols*

Office: 16-13-1

The Pre-Schools of Manzanar are a part of the Elementary Schools. The Nursery Schools enroll children between the ages of $2\frac{1}{2}$ and $4\frac{1}{2}$. The Kindergarten enrollment includes children between the ages of $4\frac{1}{2}$ and $5\frac{1}{2}$.

School Housing - Schedule - and Routine

All pre-school sessions are half day sessions. Children are in attendance from Monday through Friday throughout the calendar year. Maximum enrollment in a Nursery unit is 25 children under the direction of two trained teachers. A single teacher is in charge of each Kindergarten unit, the number varying from 12 to 20.

The number of Nursery School units depends upon the number of teachers available. At present (October, 1944) there are two morning sessions housed in buildings 1-14 and 17-15, and two afternoon sessions housed in buildings 9-15 and 20-15.

There are six Kindergarten units, three of which are morning sessions housed in buildings 20-15, 23-15, and 31-15, and three of which are afternoon sessions housed in buildings 11-15, 23-15, and 31-15.

Nursery Schools are open in the mornings from 8:30 to 11:30 and in the afternoons from 1:00 to 3:30. Kindergarten sessions are from 9:00 to 11:30 AM and 1:00 to 3:30 PM.

The morning Nursery School program emphasizes an outdoor program of free-play activities and health routines. The afternoon program places the emphasis upon sleep.

The Kindergarten emphasizes experiences which bridge the transition from Kindergarten to First Grade. These include organized work periods and group discussion, informal experiences leading to a reading-readiness program, singing games and rhythms, dramatic play, and creative art stimulating language expression.

Parent Organizations

Each Pre-School unit is sponsored by a parent organization which centers its activities around the school program. The Pre-School Board members are the chairmen of the specific Parent organizations. This Board plans the objectives for the Parent Program together with the Pre-School Supervisor.

A fee of ten cents per child ^{per month} has been fixed by the Parent Organizations. This fund is used to purchase additional equipment not supplied by the Elementary Office.

Teachers

All Pre-School units are in charge of Evacuee teachers. These teachers are supervised and trained by an appointed personnel member of the Elementary Staff. Most of these teachers have received credentials issued by the Superintendent of Education in Manzanar after a year of satisfactory service in the Pre-School program.

Advantages of the Pre-Schools

Manzanar homes are limited in both play space and suitable play equipment. The Pre-Schools provide adequate and safe play areas, including outdoor and indoor space, trained leadership in Pre-School techniques, an environment that emphasizes and furthers the normal development of each individual's interests and abilities. Incidentally, the Pre-Schools render a much appreciated service to mothers by giving them a little freedom from the constant supervision which children of this age require, and releasing them for necessary community work.

Mary A. Schauland
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Supervisor of Pre-Schools