

Alamo Elementary School New Parent FAQs

Important dates

- First Summer K Play Date: Sunday, June 14, 2015, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., Rochambeau Park (25th Ave between California and Lake)
- Second Summer K Play Date: Saturday, August 1, 2015, 10:00 a.m. - Noon, Rochambeau Park (25th Ave between California and Lake)
- First Day of School: Monday, August 17, 2015, 8:40 a.m. – Meet on the playground and look for your child's classroom number. All teachers will hold a sign with their respective classroom number. At 9:00 a.m. there is a Welcome Meeting for all New Alamo Parents so please plan on staying for an additional 45 minutes after drop-off.

What do I need to do before school starts?

- Turn in all paperwork to the Alamo School Office
 - Required Documents
 - Birth Certificate, if new to SFUSD
 - Parent I.D.
 - SFUSD School Health Form (to be completed by Health Provider)
 - including Kindergarten entrance physical exam
 - Student Emergency / Medical Information Form Card – given out on the first day
 - Join Alamo's Googlegroups to stay up to date on school activities, events and volunteer opportunities, (information on how to join is below).
 - Come to both Summer Play Dates. It's a great way for you and your child to meet other incoming families as well as current Alamo families and to ask questions before school starts.

When will I know what classroom my child is in?

There are four Kindergarten classes at Alamo. You will receive a letter from the school typically the week before school starts letting you know which class your child has been assigned to. The classroom number that your child is assigned to is found on the address label of the letter in the upper right hand corner. The following is a list of the K Teachers and their classroom number:

Ms. Laurie Wong – 108

Ms. Betty Liu – 111

Ms. Lisa Borhórquez – 113

Ms. Shannon Ikeda – 114

What should I pack in my child's backpack?

The K teachers provide all of the necessary school supplies for their students. Just make sure your child has a backpack without wheels which is large enough to carry a folder, a lunchbox and a water bottle. Morning recess is "snack recess" and your child has the option to have a healthy snack during this time. Alamo is not a nut free school. Teachers will typically send home allergy forms during the first week of school, so they are aware of who is allergic to what. Your child can opt to bring their lunch or buy lunch from the school district. (See additional FAQs for more information about the school lunch program.) Please also have your child bring a water bottle to school every day.

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Please label all items your child brings to school especially water bottles, lunch boxes, folders, jackets, fleeces, vests, hats and any other clothing that may be taken off during the day. You will be amazed by how much unlabeled clothing ends up in the lost and found and is never claimed.

How does morning drop off work?

Mornings at Alamo start out on the playground. The bell rings at 8:40 a.m. Everyone lines up by classroom to listen to any announcements from Principal Fong and to do the Pledge of Allegiance. Parents can walk their child onto the playground and help them get lined up with their class.

Yard supervision by one of the Alamo staff begins at 8:20 a.m. If you are dropping off your child between 8:20 and 8:40 a.m. be sure you see a staff member in the yard. Otherwise, please wait with your child until the classes line up at 8:40 a.m.

Alamo also has a "Stop, Drop and Go" program. "Stop, Drop and Go" is for parents who drive to school and cannot go into the schoolyard with their children. There are two "Stop, Drop and Go" white zones; one on each side of the school (23rd Ave entrance and 22nd Ave back gate). There are parents and/or teachers who help assist you in getting your child out of the car and into school. There is no need for you to even get out of the car. The teachers walk students up to their classrooms.

Is there a before school program available?

Yes, Alamo has a Morning Program from 7:45-8:20 a.m. which is supervised by an Alamo Foundation employee. Children play in the schoolyard or in the library on cold/rainy days. Parents can sign-up for this paid program in the school office at the beginning of the year.

What should I do if my child will be late for school?

If you are a couple of minutes late, you can take your child directly to the classroom. After 8:45 am, please walk your child to the School Office, pick up a Tardy Pass, and hand the Tardy Pass to your child's teacher upon arriving in the classroom.

What if my child is sick or cannot attend school?

Please call the School Office 415-750-8456 by 8:30 a.m. Let the office know your child's name plus classroom number and the reason why your child will not be at school. You must call the office every day that your child will be absent.

How do I enter the school other than at pickup and drop off?

After standard pickup and drop off times, all of the school gates and doors to the outside are locked except for the main entrance on 23rd Ave. Please go to the School Office and sign in as a visitor and sign-out when you leave.

What if I need to pick my child up before the school day ends?

If you need to pick up your child early, for example for a doctor or dentist appointment, go to the School Office, where you will be asked to sign out your child and give the reason for the early pickup.

What happens at lunchtime?

Lunch for the Kindergartners starts at 11:15 a.m. and ends at 12:00 noon. The teacher walks the students to recess in the yard for 20 minutes where they are supervised by adult lunch monitors. At 11:35 a.m. the children use hand sanitizer and the lunch monitors take them into the cafeteria to eat their packed lunches or school

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lunches with their class. At 11:59 a.m. the Kindergarten teachers pick up their classes and take the children back to the classroom.

Alamo has a Lunch Time Wellness Program where trained adults facilitate structured physical activities to encourage teamwork on the schoolyard. The exact schedule will be announced at the beginning of the school year.

You will receive information about the school lunch program from SFUSD (how to pay, qualifying for reduced cost or free lunch, etc.), but here is the basic program: <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/nutrition/schoolmeals/mealpricesand-payment.html>. School lunches need not be preordered, so if your child forgets to bring a packed lunch, school lunch will be provided, and payment is billed automatically through the system. All families are required to complete the school lunch form at the beginning of the school year, even if your child will not participate.

Are the Kindergarteners on the school yard at the same time as ‘Big Kids?’

During the morning recess from 10:00-10:20 a.m. the kindergarteners share the yard with 1st and 2nd graders.

Lunch recess from 11:15 to 11:35 a.m. and afternoon recess from 1:15 to 1:25 p.m. is just Kindergarten and 1st grade.

How does afternoon pick up work?

The school day ends at 2:40 p.m. Your child’s teacher will walk the class out to the playground. Please wait for the teacher to dismiss your child into your care.

Pickup can be hectic and stressful for a child if the parent is late. So it is very important to allow the time you need for parking etc. to get to school on time.

If your child is enrolled in an onsite after school enrichment class or afterschool program, your child’s teacher will make sure your child is dismissed to the person in charge of that program.

Before the start of the school year, you will provide the School Office with a list of people permitted to pick up your child. The list is shared with your child’s teacher.

There is no “Stop, Drop, and Go” program in the afternoon; however, parents do double park to get students.

What are the different types of after school programs offered?

1. Alamo offers 3 onsite afterschool programs
 - RASDC – Richmond District Afterschool Collaborative
 - Chinese School at Alamo
 - Russian School
2. Afterschool Enrichment Classes – 1 hour classes either 1 or 2 days a week
 - Academic Chess
 - Ceramics with Deborah Hoch
 - Hip Hop Hooray with Nagata Dance
 - Sports with Annie Murphy
 - Spanish Class
3. Activities led by parents, such as Girl Scouts or sports teams.

Where can I get more information about my child’s daily schedule?

Back-to-School Night is held in September. At Back-to-School night, you will meet with your child’s teacher in the classroom and receive more detailed information about your child’s class’s daily schedule. In addition to the standard Kindergarten curriculum of reading, writing, and math workshops, the children have numerous enriching activities, many of them funded by the PTA/Foundation.

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How do I sign up for Alamo Googlegroups (Parent LISTSERV)?

1. Go to <http://www.friendsofalamo.org>
2. On the right hand side of the home page is a section to sign up for emails.
3. Enter your email and hit Subscribe to join.
4. You will receive an email confirmation that you need to accept in order to be added to the list serve.

How do I find out what's happening at the school?

The **Gator Weekly** (available in English & Chinese) is Alamo's official school communication which is sent electronically to your email inbox every Wednesday by 3 pm. Families who prefer paper copies will receive information through the Wednesday Red Envelopes. Occasionally, you will also receive a Wednesday Red Envelope from your teacher with field trip permission slips and sign-up forms.

We also have a monthly school newsletter in English & Chinese, **Alamo Matters**, which comes out at the end of the month. The electronic version contains pictures and articles, whereas the paper version is mainly text.

Googlegroups is our moderated list for last minute reminders and parent-to-parent communication. Typically you can expect 3-4 emails a week.

Each classroom will also have *at least* one Room Parent who coordinates classroom events and volunteer opportunities, disseminates information, and serves as the liaison between teacher and parents.

Our school website, www.friendsofalamo.org and our Facebook page, **Friends-of-Alamo-Elementary-School-San-Francisco**, are also excellent sources of information about school-wide events.

Teachers will also post important messages outside of the classroom doors. There are also many bulletin boards outside of the main office where there is information about PTA/Foundation, afterschool and community events.

How can I get involved?

There are a number of ways for you to be involved at Alamo:

- Join the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). PTA meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 6:30 p.m. in the School Library.
- Serve on a PTA committee. At the first PTA meeting and during the first weeks of school, there will be many signup sheets for all kinds of volunteer opportunities. We can always use a helping hand. Our first school-wide event is the Halloween Carnival and October comes fast once the school year begins.
- Participate! Plan on attending Alamo events. In addition to the summer K Play Dates and Halloween Carnival, we have an annual Spell-A-Thon, a Science Fair, a Raffle and an Auction. We always kick off the year with a School-wide Picnic in Golden Gate Park.
- Become a Room Parent. Each teacher will provide the specifics for their classroom at the beginning of the year.
- Offer to help in the classroom.
- If you can't donate your time, then please consider being extra generous during the many fundraising opportunities throughout the year.

Whom can I contact with other questions?

Request a Kindergarten Buddy at the New Parent Orientation Night to be paired with an Alamo family with a rising first grader. The purpose of the Kindergarten Buddy is to answer any questions you might have and help you acclimate more quickly. Read our website to get a feel for the school, get more information and find answers to common questions. Alamo's Googlegroups is your friend and a great way to meet other parents and read archived questions. Our fantastic School Secretary, Shellie Wiener, is available from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and is always a great resource if you can't find the answer in any of the places listed above.